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"Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!"*

by David C. Steinmetz

That strikes most of us, if we are honest with ourselves, as an exaggerated sentiment. It is difficult from our own experience of listening to sermons in Protestant parishes to understand the sense of passionate urgency which prompted this confession from St. Paul. A sense of urgency is not the feeling most commonly inspired by Protestant preaching. There is very little said in the average sermon which could not as well be put off until next Sunday or the Sunday after that. It is, I am afraid, an infrequent experience for Protestant worshippers to leave morning worship with a stunned sense of having been confronted with the inescapable issues of life and death. Preaching, which in the words of the late B. L. Manning was meant to be a "manifestation of the incarnate Word from the written word by the spoken word," has become in our day a bland repetition of religious platitudes and folk wisdom—familiar, predictable and boring. Small wonder that many critics of the Church have suggested that preaching will in the future be at best a minor function of the ordained ministry.

Preaching has not always been held in such low repute by Protestants. Indeed, it was the central act of Puritan worship. To say that preaching was well-regarded by the Puritans is to raise as many problems as it solves. One of the most difficult things about Puritanism is to say exactly what it was. It has been used, of course, as an unflattering epithet to describe a Christian piety gone sour, an unlovely legalism more interested in enforcing a series of rules than in commending the love of God. And yet if there is anything characteristic of Puritanism, it is the intensity and depth of its religious experience. Puritanism is an experiential or experimental religion, and the Puritan is a man who claims to have had a living experience of the God of wrath and redemptive love, how-

*A sermon preached on I Cor. 9:16 in York Chapel, February 23, 1973, on the occasion of the ordination of Richard E. Gillespie.

ever set and logical the formulae may be which he uses to describe this experience. John Bunjan claimed to preach "what I felt, what I smartingly did feel."

The Puritans, without entertaining any illusions about the limitations of the men ordained to preach in their churches, still regarded the pulpit as the throne of God and the sermon as the principal means for the extension of the rule of God over creation. The Puritan divine, therefore, was under heavy obligation to be prepared before he preached and a welcome compliment was to say that the "sermon was well studied." For the Puritans the text of St. Paul, "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel," was not difficult to understand. The King's business was transacted in a pre-eminent way by the proclamation of the gospel from the pulpit. To stand in the pulpit was to stand on the barricades of the Kingdom of God. Nothing could be more relevant, nothing more decisive for the destiny of man.

Of course, even then the sermon was under attack as an ineffective or secondary means for furthering the work of the Church in the world. There have been—and still are—four fundamental objections to preaching as an activity of the Church. These objections may, I think, be imperfectly summarized as sacramentalism, spiritualism, rationalism, and activism. Let us look briefly at each in turn.

1. Sacramentalism. The medieval understanding of preaching regards the sermon as a preparation for the reception of grace through the sacraments. The sermon calls men to the sacraments. The medieval image is the image of a priest, standing on the steps of the cathedral, calling men to come inside to the confessional booth, the baptismal font or the altar rail. God does not give grace through the sermon—or at best he gives a kind of preparatory grace. But the action of God in forgiving sins takes place in the sacraments.

This attitude toward preaching is well illustrated by a conversation which took place between Reinhold and Ursula Niebuhr and which Reinhold Niebuhr reports in his essay "Sunday Morning Debate."

"My wife and I were on our way to the Sunday morning service at the cathedral. To compensate her for the number of times she has to hear me preach I go with her on my two free Sundays of the year to the cathedral. This bargain is further weighted to my advantage by the graceful concession from

my wife which permits such tardy arrival that we can miss the sermon and yet hear the litany. 'We Anglicans,' declared my wife, 'do not need a sermon if we have the service. There is more geniune religion in a well-sung litany than in any sermon.' I agreed to that. A good boys' choir covers a multitude of sermons, particularly if the sexless and austere beauty of its song echoes through the majestic vaults of a cathedral. It is too bad that there are so few places where you can hear both a vigorous sermon and a good choir.

"My spouse countered this by enumerating the parsons in her denomination whom I like to hear preach. There are quite a number, I admit. 'You may have more good preachers than we,' she said, 'but you need them more desperately and do not have them in proportion to your need. We do not need them.' "

The Protestant understanding is that preaching is an action. If you like, it is a sacramental act. In and through the words of the preacher, the Word of God confers grace, works the forgiveness of sins, awakes and nurtures faith. In the Catholic sacraments something is both symbolized and brought about. In Protestant preaching, when it is a preaching of the Word of God, something is both symbolized and brought about. The role played by the sacraments in Roman Catholic thought is taken over in Protestant thought by the preaching of the Word of God. Even baptism and the Lord's Supper are for Protestants only a visible Word, a visible preaching. It is not water which cleanses from sin, but the promise of God attached to the water, which must be apprehended in faith.

Under the impact of Protestant thought, Roman Catholic theology has developed a very similar theology of the preached word. And yet I cannot help but feel when I read contemporary Catholic theologians that the renewed emphasis on preaching as a kind of sacramental action is still thought of within a medieval framework. For a Protestant it is through preaching that God forgives sins. For a Catholic, preaching, though an act of God which confers grace, confers really a kind of preparatory grace which must be consummated in the sacraments to be effective. Sin is still forgiven in the confessional booth. I have yet to read a Roman Catholic author who abandons this understanding, however much he may wish to stress the importance of preaching and of a theology

of the Word of God. But I could be mistaken.

2. Spiritualism. A second objection is the one raised by the spiritualists. Spiritualists, in the sense in which I am using the word, are not people who believe in ESP or who attempt to contact late Aunt Minnie who succumbed to her sciatica last winter. They are the people who believe that religion is essentially a private matter, that inner spirituality is more important than the performance of ritual acts, and that the test of authentic piety is its ability to motivate men to achieve concrete ethical goals.

Perhaps the clearest statement of the Spiritualist objection to preaching can be found in the debate, which took place in the 16th century, between Martin Luther and an itinerant school teacher from Nuremberg, Hans Denck. Both Luther and Denck agreed that God can only be known through His self-revelation in the Word. But here the agreement ends and the differences begin to multiply. Preaching is not an essential activity for Denck because God speaks directly to the human heart. God's Word is not an esoteric or fantastic religious experience. It is the voice of the Logos who calls men to obedience to God. While there are millions of men who have not read the Bible and who cannot hear the proclamation of the gospel, there is no one who has not heard the voice of God speaking within him. Because the Word of God speaks to all men, all men are responsible to God and cannot plead that they have never heard the message of redemption or were not predestined to receive grace. Men do not initiate their own salvation, but they are free to accept or reject the claim of God laid immediately upon them by the divine Word. Spiritualism is a religion of the Inner Word.

For Luther, however, and for Protestantism generally, the Word of God is something external before it is something internal. It is not the case that the Word of God speaks directly to the heart of man without external mediation. The Word of God is something spoken, written and preached—all external acts. God has made himself known in the concrete humanity of Jesus Christ. He has bound his Spirit to the apostolic testimony of Holy Scripture. God comes to man from without, through the elements of bread and wine or through the proclamation of the gospel. Faith is not something which by a kind of spontaneous generation sprouts up suddenly in the heart of man. It is an answer to a Word spoken to it from without.

The Spiritualists, by beginning with what they believe to be the still, small voice of God spoken in secret in their heart, make it impossible to distinguish the voice of God from the voice of their own imagination. But even more dangerously, they unwittingly provide man with an excuse for his disobedience to God. If revelation is an inner voice, then God is bound to the sensitivity and strength of man's religious intuition. Those who have no religious experiences cannot be held accountable for their rebellion against God. For Luther it is precisely the fact that the Word of God is not dependent upon human receptivity that it can effectively unmask human pretension and sin. God's Word has universal validity apart from human experience and even, perhaps, in spite of it.

3. Rationalism. The third objection to preaching is closely related to the second. It is a small and almost imperceptible step from the inner voice of spiritual experience to the inner voice of reason. Preaching is unnecessary for the rationalist because it only tells him what he knows already if he listens to the voice of common sense, if he follows the moral instinct which is the inalienable possession of every rational man.

When I was a graduate student at Harvard, I used to pass every day on my way to the Divinity School a museum of German art. On the front and sides of this museum were carved in stone several famous quotations from German literature. I remember in particular the quotation carved over the side door. I assumed it was from Kant, though it was unidentified. The quotation read as follows: *Du kannst denn du sollst.* Freely translated it means: you can do it because you should do it. Your abilities correspond to your duties; your duties are not heavier than your abilities can bear. That is all you know and all you need to know. It is the sum and substance of true religion. You can do it because you should do it.

In the 18th century there were a great many people who thought of Christianity as a series of duties, known to all men of good will apart from revelation. When John Toland called his famous treatise, *Christianity Not Mysterious,* he made clear by that title the general disposition of his time. For Toland and those who shared his views, Christianity was a rational, natural religion. What is mysterious, Toland felt, is irrelevant and really not worth consideration by rational men. Particular religions are important only insofar as they embody ideas and moral standards common to all men. True religion is natural

religion. It is that religion held everywhere by all men at all times. Christianity and Buddhism are not important in themselves; they are important only to the extent that they each, in their own way, witness to a common natural religion. What is distinctive about a religion is by the same token false. Christianity is morality and Jesus is important as a moral teacher.

Benjamin Franklin summarized very well the basic presuppositions of people who felt this way about Christianity, when he wrote in his autobiography: "I never doubted the excellence of a deity, that he made the world and governed it by his providence, that the most acceptable service of God was the doing of good, that our souls are immortal, and that our work will be rewarded here or hereafter." In short, for Benjamin Franklin as for Toland and Kant, the essence of Christianity is morality.

This approach to Christianity tended to undermine the importance and centrality of Jesus Christ. The moral law, the duty which God requires of man, is written on man's heart. We do not learn the moral law from Christ. We know it already. We only see illustrated in the life of Christ something which we know independently of him. When Jesus uttered his moral teaching, he was pointing out great truths which men knew before Jesus uttered them and which are valid even if Jesus had never taught them. Christianity, these people argued, is reducible to morality. While Jesus fulfilled a useful role as a moral teacher and example, he is not necessary to Christianity. The moral law, which is the only really important thing, can be known apart from Jesus and thus apart from the preaching of the Church.

Nor is this approach to Christianity wholly out of fashion.

Dr. James Luther Adams of Harvard Divinity School was riding on a train from New York to Boston, when he happened to sit down beside an astronomer. The two men struck up a conversation about theology and for the better part of the trip across the Connecticut countryside they discussed the meaning of the Christian faith. Finally as the train pulled into the station at Boston the astronomer, reaching for his hat and coat, said: "Come now, Dr. Adams, isn't it true that the whole of Christianity can be summed up in the Golden Rule?"

"Of course," snapped Dr. Adams, "and all astronomy can be summed up as 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star.' "

Rationalism draws a circle too small to contain reality and the rationalist objection to preaching ends by reducing Jesus Christ to an addendum, a footnote to a system which is complete without him.

4. Activism. The final objection to preaching is the objection of the Activist, who regards talk as ambiguous and who considers the language of deeds to be the only valid speech. Talk is cheap; works of love are what count. The Church needs to do less talking and more acting. It must become involved in human suffering along the Jericho roads of this world.

While this strikes us as a peculiarly modern objection to preaching, it, too, has a long history. Perhaps the most famous critic of the Church which talks, but does not act, is Thomas Müntzer, who perished in the Peasants' Revolt of 1525. Müntzer attacked all Christendom, but especially Martin Luther, who, according to Müntzer, had made Christianity too easy by preaching a honey-sweet Christ. Müntzer called him Dr. Lügner, Dr. Liar. Luther, he said, only asks people to believe, which is an easy thing to do, and neglects the really difficult part of the gospel, which is living a life of obedient discipleship.

Luther replied that Müntzer had turned the gospel on its head. Faith is the real problem not works. Any one can show kindness to his neighbor, but it is difficult to believe.

Activists like Müntzer are right to attack discrepancies between the Church's being and its doing. But they draw a false conclusion when they observe in the Bible that the Church is an army and forget that it is a hospital as well. And therefore they are disillusioned when the Church does not march to the battle, but only, somewhat belatedly, hobbles there on crutches.

There is a heresy abroad in the land that the Church is well and knows what the gospel is and has only to apply that gospel in the world—which has come of age and is so well that it is difficult to see why it should have any need of the gospel. But the Church is not well; it has never been and will never be. The whole have no need of a physician but only the sick. And the Church is filled with the sick. Moreover, the natural tendency of the Church is toward infidelity. It will abandon the gospel if given half a chance and must be reminded over and over again by Word and sacrament what demands have been laid on it by God and what has been given to it in the gospel. There

is a desperate need in our time for the proclamation of the sovereign grace of God to the Church. I do not hear the grace of God proclaimed in the churches which I visit—only works-righteousness—and I do not have the feeling that my experience is unique.

None of these objections finally satisfies us. We cannot play preaching off against the Lord's Supper, since preaching is itself a sacramental act. We cannot escape from the proclamation of the Church to our inner experience without entering a dream world in which it is impossible to distinguish the authentic voice of God from the projections of our own fantasies and desires. We cannot flee to the rationalism of Kant and Franklin without embracing a religion which finds no necessary place for Jesus Christ. We cannot lose ourselves in doing without facing the nagging doubt that the really difficult question is the question of being. It is, after all, entirely possible that the words "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee," could be spoken to a minister or social worker as well as to a businessman. Babbitt is not the only one who stands in peril of soul.

Perhaps we have analyzed the crisis of our age incorrectly. Perhaps St. Paul's confession, "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" is normative and our tongue-tied hesitancy aberrational, rather than the other way around. Perhaps, just perhaps, it is not preaching which is at fault, but our preaching.

Luther drew a distinction between two kinds of words in order to make clear what the Bible means when it speaks of the Word of God. There is, of course, the *Heissel-Wort,* the Call-Word, the word which we use when we apply names to things which already exist. The biblical story of Adam in the garden is a fine example of this. He names all the creatures. He does not create them; he only sorts them out and gives them labels.

But there is a second kind of Word, the *Thättel-Wort* or Deed-Word, which not only names but which effects what it says. Adam looks around him and says, "There is a cow and an owl and a horse and mosquito." But God looks around him and says, "Let there be light," and there *is* light.

God's Word is a Deed-Word; it creates new possibilities where no possibilities existed before. The Word of God is a Word which enriches the poor, releases the captives, gives sight to the blind, and sets at liberty those who are oppressed.

The Word which the Church proclaims is a Deed-Word. It is a Word which meets man at the point of his greatest need

and liberates him. The Church which has become modest about the proclamation of the gospel is not a Church which has become more relevant to the human situation, but less so.

During the Second World War a courier service was developed from occupied Norway to neutral Sweden. Bishop Odd Hagen of Norway was one of the couriers, who, at the risk of his own life, carried concealed messages across the Norwegian border into Sweden, where they could safely be relayed to the intelligence services of the Allies. I once heard Bishop Hagen describe his work. "We did not read the messages," he said. "We did not tamper with them or alter them. That was not our commission. Our sole task was to deliver messages composed by others. We were not asked to be original or imaginative. We were only asked to be faithful. We were to hand on a message as it had been handed to us."

Jesus Christ is the Deed-Word of God. It is He and no one else—certainly no program or quadrennial emphasis—who has been anointed to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. The Church has been commissioned, not to be original, but to witness to him. By spoken word, by sacrament, by service to others we point like John the Baptist to the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. We have no other commission. "Woe to us if we do not preach the gospel!"

Biblical Connotations of "Commencement"*

by W. D. Davies

The paradoxical use of the word "commencement" to mark the end of the academic year has always intrigued me. I presume that the reason for it is that for students such as you of the class of '73 it signifies the beginning of a new life in a larger world for which you have long been preparing. The moment of truth for your academic training has arrived. And in this, your commencement is just like that of any other group of students in the Humanities and the Sciences who are now leaving the Universities and Colleges. And like them you will not need to be told that you are entering upon a world that is moving with a bewildering rapidity in all sorts of unpredictable ways, bringing startling challenges of a new dimension and a new gravity, a world adrift on change and harassed by the irrepressible new. And yet, if what you have been learning during your years in this School is anywhere near the truth, your commencement into the Christian ministry has a peculiar dimension and is profoundly different from that of the students I have mentioned. It carries with it implications which, of necessity at least, do not always accompany the commencements of students who are not entering that ministry. Leaving aside the distinction between a "lay" and "ordained" ministry for the moment, and assuming that your ordination into the ministry means, at the very least, that you are in some sense "set apart," what are the implications of your "commencement"?

To answer this question I have turned to the Bible, and present as the title for my words "Biblical Connotations of Commencement." The title is pretentious, because all that I intend to do is to recall you to the elementals. Perhaps many of you will be fearing that here again will be a student who will impose his own specialism upon his assigned task, and

*Address delivered at the Divinity School Closing Convocation in York Chapel on April 25, 1973.

blindly ignore urgent and justifiably relevant needs, which face the class of '73, of which he is blissfully unaware, because he is innocently looking at that class through his own Biblical blinkers. Doubtless there is more than a grain of justification for your fear. I am, however, aware of countless factors—theological, historical, ecclesiastical, psychological, sociological, political and cultural—which impinge powerfully on the modern ministry, but, fortunately for you, I am also aware that I am ill-equipped to deal with them. And yet it is not devotion to my specialism nor my ignorance of many profundities and complexities surrounding the modern ministry that has led me to speak to you out of the Bible. It is rather the conviction that what the Bible presents is important to you, indeed essential, that, whatever else may impinge upon your understanding of the ministry, the Bible must be made to do so.

Let me put it in this way. During your ministry there are three main tangible facts (there are many other intangible ones) with which you shall be dealing: the World, in its glory and achievement and promise, in its misdirection and tragedy and sin; the people who call themselves Christians—the Church or Churches or communities among which you will move; and a Book—the Bible.

About the world, as it will encounter you, I shall not concern myself to speak. You will find it inescapable: it will seduce and threaten you, perhaps engulf and enslave you, in ways you cannot now imagine; perhaps it will be so "much with you" that "late and soon getting and spending," even in the ministry, you may "lay waste your powers."

As for the second tangibility—the Church—I shall only remind you of the profound work of a former colleague. John Knox finds implied and expressed in the mere existence of the Christian community all we know about our faith and all we need to know. I have no desire to depreciate the significance of that community nor to belittle the necessity of the light of the memory and mind of that community for the true understanding of the Gospel, indeed, as a corrective to any interpretation of the Faith. Yet I should have to confess that I have not always been able to see in it—in isolation, at least—what John Knox sees in it.

Or, rather, I have sometimes found it necessary to appeal to the third tangibility—the Bible—even against the tangible community. It is arguable that the fixation of the Canon was

a confession by the Christian community itself of its need for a court of appeal outside and above itself. From one point of view, the Canon is, in fact, the Church in self-criticism.

True, Christianity is not a religion of a book in precisely the same sense as is Judaism: we are not called to be Scribes or Pharisees nor such "Bible People" as were the Qumran Covenanters. Perhaps the main weakness of my generation—in the first flush of the enthusiasm with which we greeted the movement of so-called Biblical theology—was that we too pïously and proudly and naïvely thought that, if we could adequately and clearly interpret the Bible in its own terms, we should be meeting the challenge of our times. The times have proved us wrong. The consequences of uninformed Biblicism can be and often are horrendous: but even enlightened Biblicism, in itself, is not enough.

And yet, having admitted this, I cannot but regard knowledge of the Bible, that is, constant entry into it and engagement with it with intelligence and spiritual wrestling, as the sheet-anchor of a sustained ministry. When not only the world, but the Christian community itself, will disappoint you, and, what is here more to the point, will be disappointed in you, you will be driven back to the witness of this—the third tangibility of your ministry, the Book—for healing, comfort, inspiration, recreation and challenge. So I do not need to apologize for asking you to consider what are the Biblical connotations of your commencement. I shall, for the sake of clarity, separate things that are inseparable, and the items I shall isolate are each to be held in mutual support and mutual criticism.

I

The first connotation is suggested by the term commencement itself as it is first used in the Bible. The Bible begins with the words "In the commencement (*Berêshîth*) God created the heavens and the earth." In the first verse of the Bible, commencement is associated with the activity of God in creation. And your ministry is to be rooted in and has to deal with the One who is the beginning, through whom and from whom all things in heaven and earth exist. For you the reality of God is an axiom; the Gospel to which we are committed drives us all back to the living God who created, sustains and governs the universe and without whom we cannot be at rest. Our ideas of God are necessarily always fragmentary, always incomplete and always jejeune: they change

with our growing awareness and knowledge; they die, and, now and again, must be cast aside painfully and nostalgically like outworn clothes. But the mysterious, ineffable and indefinable Reality who encompasses us and in whom we live and move have our being is always *there,* beyond and behind, above and beneath—and in our experience.

If we think that He is dead, and not constantly seeking us, we deceive ourselves. It is we who are dead to Him, not He to us. He is present even when He is absent to us: His search for us never ceases. If the search for him dies in our lives, then are we of all men the most miserable, and our ministry a pitiable mockery, indeed a farce. One of the Psalmists has expressed this truth:

> For with Thee is the fountain of life;
> In Thy light shall we see light . . .

When everything in the garden is lovely, you may be tempted to be content with the understanding of God as a personification of the values of Truth, Beauty and Goodness, the God of the philosophers, a vague symbol: you may even be tempted to think that He is an anachronistic hypothesis to be bowed out "with thanks for his provisional services."

But there will be times for you, as there are for us all, when life will tumble in, when it can and will appear as merely the outcome of a blind force or of a cosmic energy indifferent to every value you have ever cherished, a cruel joke, an absurdity. A recent Nobel Prize winner has assured us that the universe not only *has* no meaning but *can* have no meaning and must be regarded as the chance outcome of an accident in the world of atoms, the result of an atomic game of dice or of the blind shuffling of atomic cards, or "a fortuitous conglomeration of atoms." This awful awareness you too will encounter, but in the very absurdity of existence you will be able to cast yourself upon God. To stand the strain of the human demands in your ministry you will need to be rooted in more than human resources, to be grounded in the Living God who called you by His grace. Your commencement participates in the creative power of God, in the roots of the world.

I have begun by recalling you to the ultimate ground of your ministry in the creative God. This is a plea for a personal and inward concentration, an emphasis on the need to be constantly open to His presence in His succour and demand upon us. Without "the practice of the presence of God"—to

use an old phrase, which we cannot escape even if we must interpret it anew—our own lives become arid: we may preach to others but ourselves be found wanting. At the same time let me emphasize that this is not a plea for the cultivation of a precious, withdrawn, individual spirituality, a cloistered religiosity, irresponsible and removed, a bloodless docetism. As the Bible makes clear, the rooting of your ministry in the creative God of Genesis gives it a cosmic dimension. Your ministry is not a mere hole and corner affair, no private domain, but concerned with the totality, with existence in its infinite variety, with the natural and the supernatural, the spiritual and the sensual. Not only is nothing human to be alien to you, but nothing natural. The God who called you is the God of creation; your ordination is, therefore, not a setting apart from life but for life, and life as it concerns us in its wholeness. Your commencement is for service as material and universal as creation itself.

II

But the Bible is as concerned with History as it is with Creation. There is a second "Commencement" in the Bible—that of a community or of a people. This commencement is usually traced either to the call of Abraham or to the Exodus of Israel out of Egypt under Moses. "When Israel was a child, then I loved him and called my son out of Egypt." Through that call and that Exodus there came into being in history a people or a community peculiarly related to and living out of its response to a liberating God, a just God, a suffering God, a God of pathos, who could not tolerate slavery and delivered his people. Ever since that community has persisted across the ages as a strange enigma among men.

Your ministry is related to that community, the people of Israel, the continuation of which is the Church. At some point in your life, whether as a child in your home or later on in your life, in some form or other, you encountered that community: you were overtaken by or you stumbled upon a tradition that captured you, to which you responded, and were thus brought into a new communal relationship, and, in time, to the demand of the ministry. Your commencement, then, is related not only to creation but to a particular stream of history. It occurs, ultimately, in response to and under the sustenance of a historical body, the people of God.

"History" has become a bad word in our day. Perhaps a reference to the historical People of God does not seem central to you: under contemporary pressures it may not even interest you, and, indeed, may evoke resentment and rejection even as you serve it. And I can understand this. I probably know as much as you do about the ambiguity of the life of the People of God in history. There are few criticisms of it that I have not heard, nor the force of which I have not felt. In particular two strong criticisms have stung me. An American historian once wrote that if any institution deserved to be destroyed in the French Revolution it was the Church. *Écrassez l'infame*—said one famous Frenchman. A recent commentator on modern culture, George Steiner, claims that the holocaust in modern Europe has made any defence of Christianity insupportable. It is impossible to be blind to the atrocious realities of the history of this community in various forms. In the same way it is possible to understand the terrible words of Paul Goodman about us. Let me remind you of them:

> The thread of . . . tradition has been snapped by history; Western civilization has too much disgraced itself by wars, gas chambers, atom bombs, Cold War, and the abuse of our beautiful science. Our best young will have to make themselves an honest and meaningful world out of their own ignorant and ingenuous instincts . . .

Understandable words? Yes: but hysterical and even nonsensical words, and particularly if you think of Christian History. Because it is in and through this people of God, broken, unworthy, stiffnecked, sinful, even apostate, that the Name of the Living God has been remembered, his reality and his purpose treasured, and his spirit channelled. Often reduced through the clogging of the conduits by the sin to which we are all prone to a mere trickle, it is through the earthen vessel of the people of God, usually in most humble forms, which are often unrecorded in our histories, that the water of life has come to us. Without it there would be no commencement here today, and without a living relation to it your commencement has no meaning.

And so I remind you of that second Biblical commencement—that of the people of God in history. You stand in a particular historical situation that unites you with Abraham and the great Moses himself, with the historic and present people

of Israel—who, we must never forget, are our elder brothers —an innumerable company since their day. Your commencement is not that of a number of individuals leaving on their separate tasks, but your common entry in a larger, more responsible, way into the on-going life of a community through which the purpose of God has been and will be furthered. Your commencement is rooted in the History of the people of God, in the way of Israel. It is no accident that your commencement today has been felicitously called a "Convocation."

III

So far I have been thinking of commencement only in the Old Testament. But the word "commencement" rings like a bell in the New Testament also. The "*Berêshîth*," the 'In the commencement' of Genesis 1:1 is echoed at the beginning of all the Gospels. The first verse in Mark is: "The commencement of the Gospel of Jesus Christ." The first verse in Matthew begins with "*biblios generseôs*," the Book of Genesis, or the Book of the Commencement, of Jesus Christ. It possibly looks back deliberately to the first verse of Genesis. Luke uses the verbal form for "commencement" in the second verse of his Gospel, and in the first verse of Acts. And in the Fourth Gospel we are explicitly referred to the beginning of all things: "In the commencement was the Word and the Word was with God . . ." But "the word became flesh and dwelt among us."

The New Testament, then, points to a third commencement in a person, Jesus of Nazareth. In him the previous two commencements come to completion. Creation and History find their culmination in him. He fulfills the old order that was before him and himself becomes the inaugurator of a new order and of a new phase in the history of God's people. And so your commencement has another centre—which is not another—in commitment, loyalty and devotion to Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, "so that in all things He may have the pre-eminence." It is this Jesus, crucified and risen, who is the norm for our understanding of God in creation and in history and the norm for our ministry. Loyalty to God the creator and to his people in history becomes loyalty to him.

And when we speak of him we mean no mythical figure but a tangible historical Person, who lived and spoke and suf-

fered and rose again in first-century Palestine, and who, in the harsh actualities of his day, showed forth such healing, forgiveness and boundless charity that he radically challenged the limits of the religion and society of his day with a vision of a wider, freer, deeper Rule of God. It is to this crucified but living Jesus—not to a bare fact in the past, still less to a symbol of some truth, but to a Person, who continues to challenge and sustain us—that we are committed: He is the commencement for us. And every name you will bear as a minister, Christ himself has borne before you: Deacon, Shepherd, Servant, Apostle, High Priest, Bishop. His imprint governs all ministry. In the New Testament all ministry is the ministry of Christ himself. Our ministry was born of his forgiveness of those who failed him in the Resurrection. The ministry is given to men who had betrayed Christ but had been given a second chance by the Risen Lord. There is no ministry in the Old Testament which is the result of human merit. There is no merit on the basis of which we become ministers of Christ. The New Testament refuses to contemplate any such ministry of spiritual prigs. None ever deserves to be a minister, or, as we more often express it, ought to be a minister by virtue of any moral or other qualities he may possess. On this basis the ministry is an impossible calling: it is not a human possibility. All is of grace. It is a call from grace to grace and its form is the cross—the dying to the self. Christ is our commencement and the cross our way.

IV

I have ventured to recall you to the abiding verities and unexpressed implications of your commencement, to the continuities of Christian ministry as they relate to and are revealed in the past.

But there is one further word. In the Bible the commencement is identified with the End. Protology and eschatology go together. "And he said unto me, 'Behold, I make all things new. . . . I am Alpha and Omega, the Commencement and the End.' " And your commencement is, finally, an End—related to an open future which the purpose of God has set before us. In their half playful way, the Jewish Rabbis made a very great deal of the fact that the first letter in the Bible—the "b" in *berêshîth* (commencement)—is not closed like a circle but has an open end; it is a square with one side miss-

ing: the commencement looks forward infinitely. This is what we should expect, if we take creation and history as the Bible understands them seriously.

What is creation? It is not a single act, however inconceivable, isolated in the past, but perpetual activity, a process still going on, in which the whole universe of man and nature are engaged in response to God's quest. To root your commencement in the creative power of God is to understand it as part and parcel of an ongoing process in which "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth until now, waiting for the revelation of the sons of God." God is not divinely immobile, a god of *stasis* and "law and order," who presides over an organized, "finalized" kind of existence where all openness has been removed. Creation is purposive: God's activity is aimed toward an open future for all things. To create means to overcome the evil or chaos. Our hope for the world, polluted by evil, is based on the fact that God is always creating, that he will not cease to create until his kingdom be realized. Therefore we ought not to despair. To create is to serve Him, to have a part in the creative work of God Himself, because, though we are only human beings with human responsibilities, we are governed nevertheless by that power beyond us that created us.

Similarly the history with which our commencement connects us is not simply a series of events in the past, entombed in time, like pieces in a museum, fossils unrelated to the present. The people of God has a past: we ignore it at our peril; we live by a memory. But the past we remember is one that steps out of time into our present to challenge us to new things: the history in which this commencement is rooted is living, contemporary and dynamic. The history of the people of God is governed not only by a memory but by an anticipation. It looks forward to a time when the kingdoms of this world are to become the Kingdoms of our God and of His Christ, and God shall be all in all.

Creation, History, Christ Himself point forward to change or rather to growth. Your commencement roots you in the continuities of Creation and History. Yes: but in Christ it is turned to an open future. It signifies your assumption into the cosmic drama of redemption, which is the purpose of God. You are called upon to discern the will of God for the future in the present: to prove it and to throw in your lot for it. And the

will of God is a will of *agapê*: it is the shaking of those things that are shaken that the things which cannot be shaken may remain, the reconciliation of all men and the establishment of a new humanity, the liberation of the cosmos. The pattern for God's purpose is the deliverance of slaves from Egypt and it is rooted in his infinite pathos.

This means radical openness to the future. While you are rooted in and must remain rooted in the past, you are not tied to it: you cannot deny the past, but you are free to affirm it in new ways. The Living Christ, under whose feet not all things have yet been subdued, may demand of us to sit loose to the forms and institutions of the people of God in the past; its past patterns need not be paradigms; they may need to be broken, not in order that we be anarchic, but that we may improve old forms and create new ones. The Living Christ demands that we reassess the moral teaching of the past. Yes: but not that we may be lawless, confusing licence with freedom, but free to formulate new expressions of the old teaching and to create new norms in its spirit. The Living Christ demands that we examine all structures. Yes: but not to destroy but to fulfill. Conservative snug reaction which deifies convention in the name of tradition has no part in the freedom wherewith Christ has set us free for the future and is a denial of the Faith. Equally, shallow self-righteous "revolution," which ignores tradition and imagines that it can make things new by beginning completely afresh, in the light of the insights of a single generation, is a distortion of Christian freedom. To make an opium of the past or of the future is debilitating: what matters is the Lordship of Christ over all time, past, present and to come. Continuity in change and change in continuity—the coinherence of priest and prophet—this is the commencement which you celebrate.

Perhaps the word "celebrate" can lead us back to that place where we most often encounter the living Jesus—the Last Supper. On that night in which He was betrayed, Jesus and his disciples did not spend their time reminiscing about the good old days in Galilee, when He had walked and talked with them. Rather he asked the disciples to think of a future kingdom. In that future kingdom they were to remember him. To break the bread and take the cup as he had done. Yes: but they were to remember Him not only as a figure in the past but as a living Person recalled into their midst. That Living

Presence, through the Spirit, was to lead them into all truth, to guide them in the unforeseen situations of the future. They were to be governed not by nostalgia but by the Spirit, by creativity and hope for the future: they were not to shelter with timidity behind any finality, even behind the towering memory of Jesus, but to launch out into the deep of the world and the inscrutability of the future, prepared, if necessary, to burn their boats, for his sake.

Such language is easy: you will find that to spell it out in daily life, in the cold light of a common day, in a common parish, will demand more than you alone can muster. How you are to spell it out must be left to you and your Maker. I would not presume to advise. But let me, without dealing in practicalities, sum up the nature of your commencement. It is rooted in the purposive power of God in creation: in the ever persistent people of God in History; and, above all, in the presence of that person who for us is God incarnate, Jesus our Lord. To ignore this rootedness is to be cut off from the well-spring of your life as ministers, it is to seek to live on puny truths, on which one generation may survive, but on which the generations will starve. To recognize and nourish this rootedness is not to be fossilized and irrelevant, but to be made free to the future which Creation, History and Christ Himself affirm, and to be strenthened in the inner man for those fundamental changes which are in the purpose of God.

At a time which demands of mankind a radical enlarging of its horizons, a profound deepening of its moral sensitivity, when ancient good suddenly becomes not only uncouth but even barbarous, a time which demands that mankind strike its tents and move forward to a new awareness of the interdependence of the whole human family, your commencement, rooted in the past, is in fact a promise for the future in the company of Him in whom all the promises of God are "Yea and Amen," and who gives His word that He shall be with you to the end of the age.

The Black Church: 1973*

by Joseph B. Bethea

The Black Church, 1973, claims my attention today after working a little more than a year as Director of Black Church Studies in the Divinity School. It claims attention against the backdrop of the black condition in this country, a condition of imposed poverty and oppression, a condition of segregation and discrimination—systemic in America and sustained and supported by this nation's traditions and institutions, a condition of protest and struggle against that system and against those traditions and institutions. The Black Church, 1973, claims attention because this nation has written its history and built its economy in terms of the master-slave relationship and in terms of racial superiority and racial inferiority. One of the September issues of *Time Magazine* has an article entitled, "The March to Equality Marks Time." And while the march to equality marks time, the march to monarchy in this country moves at an accelerated pace.

The Black Church, 1973, claims attention because black people have not been and are not welcome or accepted as equal participants in white American churches. The tendency of white American churches to be more patriotic than Christian, to serve the state with a greater allegiance than that with which they serve God and righteousness and justice; this tendency has created a crisis in the black community. From a time in history when the Christian Church was seen as the only hope for black people, we've moved to a time which forces the question, "Can black Americans be Christian?" Gilbert Caldwell addresses himself to this question in a recently published study booklet.

The Black Church claims attention because critics are saying that the Black Movement has moved beyond American Christianity, even in its most liberal manifestations; they say that American Christianity is not relevant to the needs and aspirations of black people, and that some other religious faith

*A sermon preached in the Duke University Chapel on November 11, 1973.

—some faith that believes in and practices racial equality—should claim the allegiance and the loyalty of black people in this country today.

The critics have a strong point, but the Black Church, the Black Christian Church, must claim our attention today because when we discover real Christianity as it was taught and lived by Jesus Christ, we will find it relevant to the needs and aspirations of all people, and black people are not excluded. Indeed if Christianity has a meaning and a message for our time, that message may rise out of the black condition. I am not talking about Christianity as it has been taught by some and practiced by many. I am not talking about the Christianity that allows itself to be subservient to the state and to the culture. I am talking about Christianity as it rises out of the story, the Judaeo-Christian story, the whole Gospel in its true application. It is said that Mahatma Gandhi would have been insulted if you called him a Christian. He is reported to have said, "Call me a Christian and I'm insulted; but call me Christ-like—I'm honored." And there is a difference. E. Stanley Jones said he was pleading with a group of young Indians one day and he said to them, "I wish you would tell me, if you will, why you are not Christians. Why will you not become Christians? What do you think of Christ? Will you not follow Him?" One of the young Indians answered, "Your Christ is all right; He is wonderful, but you Christians are not like Him."

The Black Church in 1973 is saying to the black community and to the world: "Christ is all right; the true religion of Jesus Christ is relevant; Christianity, as it is meant to be, does have meaning and a message for the black condition in America. American Christianity may not. It may not have the will to be in the world but not of the world. But Christ is still all right."

In the Black Church, 1973, Christ is all right because he brings personal salvation to the individual. This word must be said now to those who are tempted to proclaim the corporate nature of the Gospel with the kind of enthusiasm that will lead us to minimize or overlook the Gospel of personal and individual salvation. At the same time, American Christianity has been so preoccupied with personal redemption and eternal life that it is the normal human reaction for people to ask, What has the Gospel to say about my condition; what does it say to black masses who are hopelessly oppressed?

But in our concern for our corporate oppressed condition, we must not forget that Christ came also to save persons. We must not forget that God's love, revealed in Jesus Christ, makes a person better and makes life better in this world—makes life better even in oppression. We must not forget the ministry to individuals, for if we do, we neglect a cornerstone of real Christianity. Jesus came to bring healing and health, redemption and salvation to persons as individuals. To a blind man He brought sight; to a lame man He said walk; to a sick woman He brought healing; to an adulteress, forgiveness; to a dead man, life. . . . And to every individual who would be His disciple, He said, "Take up your cross and follow me."

So, in 1973, the Black Church must proclaim that Christ is all right because He brings personal salvation to men as individuals, and helps them find a better life in this world and in the life which is eternal.

In the Black Church, 1973, Christ is all right and wonderful because at the same time that he brings life and health to individuals in community, He also brings liberty to communities of people. And the individual whose experience of God does not relate to his existence in community is simply living a lie. Real Christianity lived and taught by Jesus, the whole Gospel, speaks to the circumstances and conditions under which men live. And to the present situation in America, the whole Gospel proclaims a God who is not neutral in the midst of oppression and racism and injustice. It proclaims a God who takes sides in the affairs of people. It can be said that God is in sympathy with all of His creatures. But it must be said that God is not just in sympathy nor only especially in sympathy, but God's sympathy and concern is active too in the history of the oppressed when they are his people. The Gospel proclaims a God who sent His Son and sends His Church, not only to save individuals, but to redeem the oppressed and to work for their liberation and development.

" 'The spirit of the Lord is upon me (and upon His true Church) because he has anointed me (and anointed His Church) to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me (and His Church) to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord!' And He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat

down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.' "

Today, this day, Sunday, November 11, 1973, the God of Israel, the God of Jesus Christ is active in the history of the oppressed. He sent His Son and sends His Church to liberate the oppressed and to set them free.

The Black Church, in fact any church that would be Christian and relevant in America today, must realize that we are in a new day in human relations. That church will identify with the black condition in this country; it will develop a positive approach to the current struggle for black liberation. That church will act on the belief that black unity and togetherness, that black awareness and self-respect, that black self-determination and self-development, that black religious and social development, that black economic and political development are all the will of God; that Black Power is the will of God.

In all of the years of its experience, the Black Church has tried to effect a true brotherhood and a paradigm of integrated inclusiveness in America, especially in predominantly white denominations; and the efforts have always been rejected. "We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed, perplexed but not driven to despair; we are persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down but not destroyed." The Black Church, 1973, has not lost heart. It is beginning to discover some new alternatives and some new allegiances. That Church is concerned today about theologizing the struggle of black people for liberation. That Church is considering Black Ecumenicity as a viable response to God who calls His Church into the struggle for shared power in this country; into the struggle of black people to bring down every system and every institution that oppresses in this country, and to raise up new systems that are responsive to the needs and aspirations of all of God's people, whether their condition be black or white, male or female.

The current issue of *The Upper Room* has for its cover a painting of "The Nativity" in black by an Ethiopian artist. It brings to mind the short story written by John Hendrix Clark called "The Boy Who Painted Christ Black." The lad gave the painting to his teacher as a birthday present. When the teacher opened the gift, all the school was shocked momentarily. But since it was a segregated black school, they soon

began to understand. That painting became a prized possession of the school, and it was displayed in a prominent place with the art work of other pupils.

When the supervisor came, his reaction was, "Who painted this sacrilegious nonsense?" The principal defended the work saying, "I don't think the lad was too far wrong in painting Christ black. Artists of every race have painted God to resemble themselves. We black people should have the same privilege." The principal continued, "After all, Christ was born in that part of the world that had always been predominantly colored. So that there is a strong possibility that Christ was not white."

This angered the supervisor even more and he blushed and said, "No, No, No, Christ was not a nigger!" And he fumed, "You are not being paid to teach such things, and I am demanding your resignation." But someone heard him exclaim as he left the school, "Damn if niggers ain't getting smarter."

Well, it's true! Black people are getting smarter; black churchmen are getting smarter. We are learning that God wills our liberation and freedom. We are learning that God demands our liberation and freedom. In 1973 and in all the years to come, if God's white church can't find handles for its involvement in the struggle, God's black church will. God's black church is identifying with "the least of these my brethren," with "the wretched of the earth, the oppressed and the dispossessed." It is proclaiming in word and in deed that God's Good News brings salvation and wholeness and freedom and power to all people, so that the time will come, yea the time is come, when there is no more master-slave relationship, no more superior-inferior relationships in this country or in the world. White America killed the King, but they couldn't kill the dream. It's a dream we are working for. It's a dream we are struggling for. It's a dream that many have died for. It's a dream that God is working for. And, it will come to pass.

"In the beauty of the lilies, Christ was born across the sea, with a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me; as he died to make men holy," the Black Church in 1973, and any Church that would be Christian and relevant today, will "Die to make men free": for God is marching on.

LET US PRAY:

Pour your spirit upon your Church, O God; and grant that in

all of its ethnic manifestations, your will may be known and done. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN.

The Gospel According to Simon Peter: Rambling Reflections on a Denying People

by G. William Ramsey*

Introduction

This essay is an attempt to locate and reflect upon the point of perspective from which we must do Christian theology today. From what position does the Church view its reason for being, its originative events? Through whose eyes do we view Jesus of Nazareth? In whose shoes (sandals) do we stand when we stand in the presence of our Lord? The title above indicates my conviction that on the primal level (as an initial step) the Church of our day needs to walk again at the side of the Galilean with Simon Peter. We need to do Christology as Simon Peter did it.

To do theology as Simon Peter did means first of all that we will be attempting to do Biblical theology. This means in this essay that we will take one account (Caesarea Philippi) about Simon Peter from what has been called Mark's "Kerygmatic Narrative" and three accounts from the so-called "Petrine insertions," that seem to have Simon Peter himself as their origin. From these accounts we will try to speak of Jesus of Nazareth, of our sin, and of the faith. Secondly, to do theology as Simon Peter did it is not to do theology from the perspective of St. Peter, the rock. We have intentionally designated our perspective as that of Simon Peter, rather than St. Peter. We need once again to begin our theological reflection looking up at the cross from afar. We need to examine our Lord's story as His "confessor-deniers."

Perhaps these remarks already reveal this writer's hermeneutical stance. Is not our history as a Church and our theology in American Protestantism in many senses a denial of the Lord we claim to confess? Thus, our initial point is

*Duke M.Div., May, 1973.

a simple one. We need to examine theology as Simon Peter did, because on the primal level we share his schizophrenic relationship to Jesus.

In making the distinction between Simon Peter and St. Peter, we are saying no more than that as American Protestants we need to view the Jesus confrontation as the "denier" of Christ before we can begin to appropriate the Resurrection faith as proclaimed by St. Peter in Acts. The name, "Simon Peter," holds together both the denier and the confessor. "Simon" designates the denial aspect of Peter's story. It represents the sleeping one, the one hiding in the shadows of the cross. "Peter" designates the confessional aspect of Simon's story. It represents Grace in the life of a fisherman. Let us begin then with our examination of these narratives.

The Confession

Caesarea Philippi chronologically precedes Simon Peter's denial of Jesus. Likewise, our confession of Jesus as Lord of history precedes our living out our history in denial of Him. Logically, in order to deny there must be some previous relationship between the one who denies and the one who is denied. Would Simon Peter's denial of Jesus really mean anything if he had not confessed Jesus as the Christ? We cannot deny that to which we have not confessed loyalty. Simon Peter "broke down and wept" over his denial for the very reason that he realized that he had denied the confessed One. He would not have experienced this forsakenness if there had not been a previous relationship of confessed loyalty.

The question, "Who do you say I am?" comes at us head-on as it did at Simon Peter and the disciples. We would rather answer the initial question as they did. "Who do men say I am?" The answer to this inquiry is a statistical report. It does not demand confession of us. It does not demand that we place our loyalty and ultimately our lives on the line. We simply report as the disciples did. Their report was that some said He was John the Baptist and others said that He was one of the prophets. Just as we might say that some say He is our "being itself" and others say a moral teacher, and still others say He is myth. Fundamentally these are all attempts to place this man Jesus of Nazareth within the confines of a role we wish Him to play. They are attempts to find

in Him the familiar, to set Him within the familiar frameworks of "religious persons." This is an easy question to answer for us as it was for the disciples. However, this question is not the Christological question. It only sets the stage for the demanding question that is asked of us, "Who do *you* say I am?"

This second question is the one that initiates the occasion of Simon Peter's confession. It requires more than a mere report of Simon Peter. It calls for confession. Simon Peter answers, "You are the Christ." For Simon Peter this meant that he confessed Jesus as the anointed One, the son of David. This is to say that in this man Jesus, salvation history has entered its crucial point. The designation, "the Christ," is an open-ended one. Peter does not pin Jesus down with this title. It is not one among many categories of "religious persons." Rather, it is the title which is expected and yet, although expected, it is not known. Messianic conceptions were abundant among the Israelites. Simon Peter is not in this confession saying that he has found the Messiah as he expected him to be. It is quite clear from later accounts which we will examine that Simon Peter was still confused as to how Jesus would become the Messiah. He has no specific agenda hidden behind this confession. It is a blind confession. It is not conditional. Simon Peter is not saying, "You are the Christ if you fulfill certain expectations." Although Simon Peter probably held certain expectations, his confession at this point is in reality twofold. Jesus is the Christ, and He is free to be the Messiah that He is.

Our confession of Jesus as the Christ has its similarities with this blind confession of Simon Peter. We too have hidden expectations. And yet, at our best moments, we also confess Jesus to be the Christ without condition. We allow Him a free Messiahship. By confession we enslave ourselves to the new, the *novum*, and not to the familiar, the expected. The fact that we, as Simon Peter, have our hidden expectations is a foreshadowing of his and our own denial. We deny because we cannot go all the way with Jesus and this unfamiliar Messiahship. It places demands upon us that we do not expect. We expect the king and not the serving One. That our "free confession" is not quite free is the very requisite for our denial of the Free One.

Gethsemanė

There are two accounts concerning Gethsemane that we must deal with if we are to approach the theological task through Simon Peter. One seems to be an authentic Petrine account of Jesus' prayer before His arrest. We say "authentic" well-advised that there has been much discussion about this account's authenticity. How could Peter or any of the disciples have heard this prayer if they were asleep and not with Jesus? For the purposes of this paper we will assume for several reasons that this is an authentic account. The prayer that is reported is short (a few seconds) and Jesus went only "a little farther" past where He left Simon Peter, James, and John. Thus, it is not impossible that Simon Peter could have reported this account. Further, the language used is like that which we consider to be the authentic sayings of Jesus.

The second account concerns the drawing of the sword at the time of arrest. We will take the position that this account is an insertion into the Roman Passion and Resurrection Narrative by Mark. However, we also believe this account to be authentic because of its awkwardness and its embarrassing features. The "one of those who stood by" was most likely Simon Peter, since Mark knew of the story and thought it of interest to the Roman Church. All this is to say briefly and without sufficient evidence that we are taking both these accounts to be the authentic experiences of Simon Peter.

So we are given Simon Peter in Gethsemane. He has been asked to "remain and watch" while an obviously distressed Jesus goes on "a little farther." Simon Peter hears the prayer of Jesus, and falls asleep. Hearing the final prayer of the one he had confessed as the Christ, Simon Peter gives into temptation and falls asleep. He closes his eyes in Jesus' final hour. Asked to perform the "watch-person" task, Peter along with the others leaves his Lord vulnerable. Jesus' use of "Simon" to address Simon Peter here carries with it the intention of rejecting the symbolic relevance now of "Peter" as the "rock." He has been an unfaithful watch-person. He has slept while Jesus went through the trial of temptation and while His "deliverers" were setting the trap.

The commission in this account seems to be more than just a tactical command. It is the mandate that is given by Jesus that we be attentive to our own history, that we be with Jesus in our own history in His time of trial and temp-

tation. It is an invitation to be on guard against those who would deliver our Lord into the hands of sinners. Do we not respond to this commission much in the same way as Simon Peter? We close our eyes to the trials of Jesus in our own history. We look sleepy-eyed as they come to take away our Lord to be crucified. Time and again the Church has been asleep when "the hour has come." It mostly slept in Germany in the 1930's when it was commissioned to be the watch-person, and it mostly slept here in America for 300 years until it was shaken awake by an enslaved people. The Church remained in part awake long enough to hear that people's questions, and now once again we seem to be settling back into a quiet slumber. Who knows what hour is upon us now or who awaits to deliver our Lord into the hands of sinners? With Simon Peter we have fallen asleep another time, and it will take the question of Jesus Christ to awaken us.

The commission mentioned here is not merely an ethical one, although it is that. It is fundamentally a theological and ecclesiastical commission. We are to perform the watch-person task so that in the time of trial the Church will be the Church. This means the theological task of maintaining "orthodoxy" (Christ at the center of the faith) and the ecclesiastical task of maintaining "ortho-praxis" (consistent practice). This commission to be the watch-person is understood by Johannes Metz to be the task of "political theology." One of its functions is that of ideological critique. This writer understands this commission to be an organic part of the *whole* of the theological endeavor. The Barmen Confession and its derivative, the Confessing Church of Hitler's Germany, took up this endeavor of the watch-person as an organic part of the whole of their theological endeavor. Does Jesus demand less of us?

All that is being said here is that we should see in Simon Peter in Gethsemane a commission unfulfilled. But it is not only Simon Peter's commission or even the other disciples', but it is the Church as a whole that is being commissioned. It is from the perspective of a Church that has failed to take up this watch-person task that we should begin theology. Theology must commence by acknowledging the commission of Gethsemane as its own. We are charged to "watch and remain" with the suffering One in His hour. That we have been a sleeping Church cannot be denied not without theological

denial. Once this is admitted, we can take up this commission and begin the theological enterprise.

The second account which we want to consider in this section is the account of the arrest of Jesus. We have already mentioned above that we understand the "one of those who stood by" to be Simon Peter. Simon Peter's initial response to the arrest of the One whom he had confessed as the Christ was to attempt to protect Him by force. In Mark there is no response to this act on the part of Jesus, as there is in Matthew and Luke. The action is left hanging, leaving only the impression of its futility. The later expansions are representative of the kind of response Jesus might have made, but here in Mark we have no such response. Peter, the sword bearer, is left hanging in the apparent futility of his act. He draws the sword because the Lord he thinks he has known and confessed can be defended by force. The Lord he thinks Jesus to be conquers by the sword. The Lord who is really standing before him in Gethsemane is, however, the One who conquers through the Cross. To attempt to defend Him with force is to misunderstand who He was and what His mission is about.

Before we get too self-righteous in our critique of this action let us take a good look at the way we do and practice theology. Is not much of our theology based on a conception of Jesus Christ as one who needs to be defended, whether that defense is provided by the force of reason or the sword? Do we not also confess a lord whom we understand to be defendable? Is not our way of life in this country based upon a defendable lord, one on whose behalf we can readily take up the sword? We refuse to recognize the suffering One in Gethsemane, we attempt to mold him into the defendable one. We build up systems of thought, we build up a way of life, we build up armies in our quest to defend the lord of our lives, and the suffering One is set aside for the comfortable lord who can be defended. As Christians we will not admit that we have no defense. The Suffering Servant is a contradiction of our systems of thought. He is a scandal upon our way of life, and He is, on the Cross, a refutation of all our violence done in His name. As Simon Peter learned in the garden, theologians and Church persons need to learn that the suffering One of the Cross is indefensible. We must begin both the theological and ecclesiastical tasks with the recognition that neither our capacity for thought nor our violence can add anything or defend the Cross and Resurrection.

The Denial

Now we come to the culmination of Simon Peter's confession, of his failure to take up the watch-person commission and of his attempts to defend Jesus. These acts find their climax in Simon Peter's denial of Jesus. We have said before that in order to deny Jesus there had to be a confession of Him as the Christ. The failure to be the Lord's watch-person in His hour of trial begins the denial. To attempt to defend Him with force is to deny that He is the One Simon Peter has confessed him to be, the Christ. And finally, there is the outright denial, "I do not know this man of whom you speak." While our Lord is on trial and receiving a beating, Simon Peter is below saying, "I do not know Him."

The Church and its theology must face up to the fact that Jesus of Nazareth is not "the kind of guy you just naturally love." On the contrary, He was for Peter and is for us the kind of guy you just naturally deny. When faced with this Galilean and his understanding of who He is, the suffering One, we will most likely deny Him. We, as a Church, hover in the shadows at the very points in our history where our Lord is on trial. We share a curiosity and a concern with Simon Peter over the trial, but we are not yet willing to put ourselves on the line. The question which faced Peter was: "Were you not with this blasphemer, this scandalous assault upon our way of life?" It was not: "Were you not with the Lord whom every one loves?" The Church and its theology need to come at their tasks acknowledging that this is the question that faces them. Were you not with the scandalous One, the suffering One, the about-to-be-crucified One? Our natural inclination, as Simon Peter's was, is to say—in word or in life—we never knew Him. We must begin theology with this admission that we have denied the very One we confess.

What lies between the Simon Peter hovering in the shadows and the St. Peter preaching the Gospel in the streets of Jerusalem? It is most simply the victory over the Cross in Resurrection. Paul gives us our earliest account of the resurrection appearances, and according to this account it was Simon Peter, the denier, to whom the first appearance was granted. It is only by the gift of Grace in Resurrection that Simon Peter becomes anything other than denier. So too it is with us. Our theological language is only the broken lan-

guage of denying people, except for the gift of Resurrection, in which the inevitable denial is overcome.

All we have tried to say in this essay can be summed up simply. We need to be the Church as Simon Peter was an apostle. We need to do theology as Simon Peter did. At the primal level we need to admit that the One we confess is the very One we deny and will to deny. We deny Him as we attempt to defend Him. We deny Him as we sleep through our commission to be the watch-person. And finally, we deny Him in His time of trial and suffering. Theology begins only by the gift of the Resurrection. We speak and act with our Lord only by the Grace of God. The theological task must take as its starting point this admission that the very One we confess is the One we can only deny outside the "impossible possibility" of the Resurrection.

Political Journalism: A Case for Advocacy

by H. James Lawrence*

*Duke M. Div., June, 1970. Mr. Lawrence wrote this essay in 1971 in connection with graduate work at the University of Tennessee in the College of Communications. He has meanwhile transplanted himself to Hollywood, where his creative work in religious film-making has won national recognition. The *Review* Committee felt that this essay, due to recent events on the Washington scene, has even more obvious relevance for Christian ethical consideration today than at the time it was written.

After his unsuccessful 1962 campaign for Governor of California, Richard Nixon used the forum of his famous "last press conference" to plead for a political reporter who would simply report "what the candidate says now and then." The political journalist, according to the "old" Nixon, should act as a neutral observer in covering the campaign; he should serve as an impartial transmitter of information from the politician to the public, and keep his own opinions out of it.

David Broder finds two basic flaws in this Nixon theory of Political Journalism (i.e., "Just write what I say!"). First, "the same Richard Nixon who made that earnest plea to have his words set down as he uttered them went around the country . . . systematically bending the truth to his own advantage." Second, ". . . he (and every other politician) says more than anyone in his right mind cares to read . . . Moreover, his words are only part of the story . . ."[1]

The responsibility of the political reporter extends beyond simple description and recapitulation. He must "cull from the thousands of words and the hundreds of incidents . . . those few words, incidents, and impressions that convey the flavor, the mood, and the significance of what occurred."[2]

In other words, Broder finds an inevitable *selective* process in political reporting that transcends the "neutral observer" concept of the press. Part of the reporter's responsibility involves *reflection* and *interpretation*, activities which

1. David S. Broder, "Political Reporters in Presidential Politics," *The Washington Monthly*, February, 1969.
2. *Ibid.*

are greatly influenced by personal perception. In fact, Broder expands his analysis to include reporting in general:

> Selectivity is the essence of all contemporary journalism. And selectivity implies criteria. Criteria depend on value judgments, which is a fancy word for opinions, preconceptions, and prejudices. *There is no neutral Journalism* (my italics).[3]

Broder, and other contemporary journalists, reject the *conduit* or *common carrier* theory of the press, pointing out that "the process of news selection is and always has been subjective . . ."[4] This awareness is perhaps more evident in political reporting because of the reporter's active participation within the process of news-making himself.

Political Reporters and Public Activities

For example, Broder outlines several roles adopted by the political reporter as he follows the candidates along the campaign trail. First, he may act as *Summarizer*, in which he reports what was said and done by a candidate in more or less manageable terms. This may be a relatively uncontroversial role, but it, too, involves the reporter's own selective processes.

Secondly, the reporter may serve as *Talent Scout* by putting some men forward into the public limelight—and by blocking the advancement of others. Broder feels that the Talent Scout role is actually carried out by a rather elite screening committee, especially in regard to national politics. This unofficial "committee" would include the management and staff of:

> . . . the three news magazines, the two wire services, the three radio-television networks, and the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, Washington *Evening Star*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, the *Baltimore Sun*, the Knight newspapers, the Field papers, the Gannett, Newhouse, Scripps-Howard, and Hearst chains . . .[5]

The third function of the political reporter is to serve as *Race Caller* or *Handicapper*, in which he lets the public in on how the political sweepstakes stands. He "reads the

3. *Ibid.*

4. See J. K. Hvistendahl, "The Reporter As Activist: A Fourth Revolution in Journalism," *The Quill*, February, 1970.

5. Broder, *Op. Cit.*

polls" and gives his forecast (often quite subjective) on the outcome. Fourth, the reporter may see himself as the *Public Defender*, when he develops a "we-can't-let-him-get-away-with-that" attitude toward a candidate and sets out to "get him." A fifth and final role is the exact opposite of the Public Defender: the *Volunteer*—the unpaid assistant campaign manager, who sets out to elect "his man" to office.[6]

Other writers have recognized these various roles of the political journalist. Delmer Dunn in *Public Officials and the Press* found that "the reporter envisions himself as serving a number of overarching purposes as he performs his daily work: (1) neutral information transmitter, (2) translator and interpreter of government to the people, (3) representative of the public, and (4) participant in policy-making."[7]

Dunn's examination of the relationship of the working press to the officials of government parallels Broder's description of the political reporter and the politician, for—in this country, at least—it is impossible to separate *government* from *politics*. In either case, the reporter is seen as an active participant in the events he reports.

In his role as "representative of the public," for example, the reporter may see himself as:

(1) *Watchdog* against corruption and malfeasance;
(2) *Guardian* against special interests;
(3) *Exposer* of secrecy;
(4) *Determiner* of veracity.

In his role as "participant in policy making," the reporter may see himself as:

(1) The *precipitator of action*—by focusing attention on a matter and speeding up its consideration; or by exacerbating conflict;
(2) The *policy advocate*—by presenting a story in such a way as to advocate a particular policy; by reporting support and opposition to particular items; by actually presenting proposals, analyzing merits of other proposals, etc.; by presenting ideas during direct encounter with decision-makers;
(3) The *passive participant*—in which he serves as the "gatekeeper of the communication channels";

6. *Ibid.*
7. Delmar Dunn, *Public Officials and the Press* (Menlo Park, California: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1969), p. 7.

(4) *Exerting pressure* for participation.[8]

The reporter's active role in the political process of government has been discussed at length by Douglass Cater, first in *Power in Washington* (Vintage, 1964) and later in *The Fourth Branch of Government* (Vintage, 1965). Cater understands the official and the reporter to be moved by fundamentally different compulsions:

> The official's first response to a newsworthy event is assimilative. He attempts to relate it to the broad body of record on which he precariously builds his policies. The reporter's first impulse, on the other hand, is distributive: he seeks to communicate the newsworthy event as speedily and widely as possible.[9]

This obviously sets the stage for a basic "conflict of interest" in the relationship between the press and the government official (or campaigning politician). What is clear, however, is that the reporter is not "nosing around for news" from a completely objective or detached perspective. This concept denies the significant *personal input* the reporter brings to his task:

> The trouble with "straight" reporting is that it attempts to deny the creative role the reporter plays in government. For it is a myth that even the most passionately objective reporter can be truly straight in translating the multiple events he covers into the staccato of the teletype. He must constantly make decisions—for good or bad.[10]

The Problem of Objectivity

This discussion of the reporter's "creative role" in the process of government raises certain questions about the ideal of complete objectivity in reporting the news. The active involvement of the political journalist as an "agent of news" himself seems to be contrary to the traditional emphasis on staying out of the story (i.e., avoiding any "personal input" in "objective" news reporting). Perhaps it is the very idea of "objectivity" which comes into question, especially in the light of the basic *selective processes* involved in political journalism.

John Merrill points out that the concept of "objective re-

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-18.
9. Douglass Cater, *The Fourth Branch of Government* (New York: Vintage, 1965), p. 17.
10. *Ibid*, p. 108.

porting" would involve reporting that is "detached, unprejudiced, unopinionated, uninvolved, unbiased, and omniscient"; that the objective report would, in effect, match reality.[11] Strictly speaking, such is rarely—if ever—the case.

In addition to being *selective* in dealing with "the news," the reporter is *conditioned* by his "experiences . . . intelligence . . . circumstances . . . environment . . . physical state . . . education . . . and by many other factors."[12] He is also *Opinionated*, and, in exercising his opinion, "he is actually restructuring reality; he is tampering with *what happened*; he is certainly *not* being objective."[13]

In fact, formal objectivity itself is a concept "often used with very nonobjective selectivity . . ."[14] The objectively verifiable reality is often partisan, and frequently supports one side of an argument against another. This often gives rise to the idea of "balance" as a corollary virtue to objectivity.[15] But having reported two sides of a debate may not really get at the "truth" of an event or statement. The journalist still has the responsibility of "determining the winner with respect to the available knowledge . . ." In the final analysis, the reporter must determine "the objective truth of the issue apart from the debaters' arguments, however that might upset the 'balance.' "[16]

Disagreement arises at this point. How far does the reporter go in determining veracity? To what extent does he challenge certain remarks (or accusations)? Does he indicate in a news story that a man (a public figure) may very well be a liar?

Those who argue for the reporter's public responsibility to seek the *truth* point out that only a small part of the totality of relevant information regarding a complex event can be presented to the reader or viewer at one time. Because of this, the situation may be one-sided or misleading. In fact, "the content of a news event within the reporter's own knowledge may be patently false, exaggerated or misleading, but is offered to the reader without comment and with the im-

11. John Merrill, "Objective Reporting: A Myth, However Valuable. . .," *The Quill*, July, 1969.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. Dale Minor, *The Information War* (New York: Hawthorne, 1970), p. 194.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 195.
16. *Ibid.*

plication that it is true. 'Objectivity' may be served, but the truth isn't."[17]

The classic example of this flaw in "common carrier" reporting (especially of political events) appeared during the infamous McCarthy era. Senator McCarthy made charges on the floor of the Senate which reporters knew were false, but they were obliged to report the stories without comment or warning because the newspapers they worked for were "common carriers." The reporter had no obligation to truth-as-they-knew-it other than to quote the senator correctly.[18]

The Argument for Advocacy

Today, however, many journalists argue that the reporters who failed to expose McCarthy and his tactics were not living up to their responsibility as creative participants in the process of government. There is, in fact, a rather heated debate raging over this very issue, involving on one side *the objectivist*, and on the other, *the activist.*

The *objectivist* is obligated to quote sources correctly and to describe an event accurately. Furthermore, he must not project his own opinion, nor may he insert in his writing any indication that he thinks the information might be false or misleading.[19] The *activist*, on the other hand, believes that objectively describing the events of a complicated world does not result in the truth for the source, the reporter, the reader or the listener.[20]

The activist reporter believes "he has a right (indeed an obligation) to become personally and emotionally involved in the events of the day. He believes he should proclaim his beliefs if he wishes, and that it is not only permissible but desirable for him to cover the news from the viewpoint of his own intellectual commitment."[21]

But what distinguishes this approach from the "dark days of partisan journalism"? There is not yet a completely adequate answer to this question.

Many of the "old line" journalists and publishers, such as Sydney Gruson, Benjamin C. Bradlee, and A.M. Rosenthal,

17. J. K. Hvistendahl, *Op. Cit.*
18. *Ibid.*
19. Kathryn Kenyon, "Advocacy Comes To The Newsroom," *Freedom of Information Center Report No. 250*, October 1970.
20. *Ibid.*
21. J. K Hvistendahl, *Op. Cit.*

view any trend toward "advocacy" with alarm.[22] James Russel Wiggins addressed himself to the issue in 1969:

> A reporting staff that becomes more concerned with letting the readers know what it thinks than it is with letting them know what public men think can retain one or more of the audiences in a quarreling and fragmented polity, but it cannot hope to retain its credibility with all of them.
>
> If there is no such thing as objective truth, we must anticipate that in an age of controversy, the newspaper of general circulation will have to serve up the several varieties of truth or newspapers of separate identity will arise to do so.[23]

In a similar vein, Barry Bingham expressed his own displeasure with "the tendency of young people to practice 'commitment journalism.' " "It scares me," he said, "to see how far they have gone toward discrediting the old standard of objective reporting. They dismiss objectivity in the handling of news as irrelevant and even unworthy."[24]

Hvistendahl, on the other hand, hails the event as a "fourth revolution in journalism," and prefers to term activist reporting "truth-as-I-see-it" reporting.[25] The activist reporter, with his primary emphasis on truth-as-I-see-it, feels responsibility to the audience. He asks, "If I deliver an 'objective' message to the reader, but that message is likely to take the reader farther from the truth rather than bring him closer to it, who has been served?"[26]

The activist believes that the base of news judgment should be broadened to include more newsmen with contemporary social conscience, who are actively interested in solutions to social problems, and who might make the press *an active partner* (my italics) rather than a passive chronicler of social change.[27]

22. See Stanford Sesser, "Journalists: Objectivity and Activism," *The Quill*, December, 1969.

23. James Russell Wiggins, "The Press in An Age of Controversy," *The Quill*, April, 1969.

24. Barry Bingham, "Does the American Press Deserve to Survive?" *The Quill*, January, 1971.

25. Hvistendahl, *Op. Cit.* The first revolution was "the freeing of the American press from . . . control by government"; the second, the growth of the "Objective Press"; and the third, "interpretive reporting."

26. *Ibid.*

27. *Ibid.*

The Political Journalist as Advocate

Though the controversy engulfs all of journalism, it seems to center most vividly in political reporting—primarily because of recent attacks on the news media by the Administration. Vice President Agnew's Des Moines speech of November, 1969, lifted a simplified version of the debate into public awareness and tended to put the political journalist on the defensive.

However, Agnew's attacks are nothing new in the stormy history of American journalism. The press has long had difficulty in dealing with public utterances and public actions of political men. James Russell Wiggins points to three forces which may account for this:

> The first is the election to use the lead sentence method instead of the abstracting method of reporting speeches. The second is the conclusion that literal quotation, even out of context is safest. And the third . . . a reporter barely graduated from the telegraph key and hardly out of the eighth grade was quite content to report what the public man said, but a reporter with a degree in law or philosophy can hardly be content with these mean stenographic tasks. He must tell the reader what the public man *meant* by what he said.[28]

Activists would readily agree, pointing out that "the hardness of the (journalism) formula" places a virtual straightjacket on the integrity of the reporter.[29] The activist believes that, because of certain inherent limitations imposed upon the reporter, the modern media "lie by sanitation" and sin by omission.[30]

Gerald Grant points out that journalists work by a code that makes many of them "moral eunuchs"—a code that obligates them to pretend to be without opinion or convictions.[31] Grant acknowledges the sterility of the traditional approach to objectivity, but he also warns that advocacy journalism may encourage writers to portray superficial or "cardboard" emotions in analyzing people and events:

> The challenge is to make sense out of the experts and

28. Wiggins, *Op. Cit.*

29. See Murray Kempton, "The Trouble with Newspapers," *The Washington Monthly*, April, 1969.

30. Hvistendahl, *Op. Cit.*

31. Gerald Grant, "The New Journalism We Need," *Columbia Journalism Review*, Spring, 1970.

of events. We don't need a whole new breed of novelists in action; we need more cogent journalism that tells us about problems rather than sketching conflict, that gives us the arguments rather than two sets of opposing conclusions . . .[32]

Kempton goes further in his suggestions for the renewal of American journalism by urging that newsmen "write about politicians and businessmen as if they were Mafiosi."[33] One of the big mistakes people who write for newspapers make, according to Kempton, is to assume that the participants, speaking to them as reporters, are telling them the truth.[34] "I think the disaster of American newspapers has been their continual reflection of the self-serving and incorrect judgments of events by those people who are responsible for them."[35]

Implicit within these remarks—especially for the political reporter—is the pervasive issue of government secrecy and news management. Though the topic is too complex to be considered here in any great detail, it may be easily set within the context of the argument for advocacy—or activist—reporting.

Echoing Kempton's sentiments, *Time* editorialized recently that "the news media . . . could better serve the public interest by being less considerate of the sensibilities of government officials who try to manage the news . . ."[36] *Time* went on to point out that "secrecy is all too often used as an easy cover for operation failures, as a mask for individual or collective mistakes in policy making, as a shield for actual wrong doing and as a cloak to hide the undertaking of new and often costly commitment."[37]

McGaffin and Knoll are even more expressive:

> Nothing is safe—not even the government of the United States—when the citizens who are its sovereign are told so little of what they need to know, and can believe so little of what they are told. Official secrecy and deception do not produce pliant, cheerful, obedient subjects—at least, not in America. They do produce suspicious, frustrated, cynical

32. *Ibid.*
33. Murray Kempton, *Op. Cit.*
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Ibid.*
36. *Time*, January 11, 1971.
37. *Ibid.*

or apathetic citizens, many of whom are losing faith in the workings of democracy.[38]

Other writers have emphasized the importance of the American press *not* to serve as "cheerleaders" for our side, but to help the largest possible number of people to see the realities of the changing and convulsive world in which American policy must operate.[39]

The activist reporter points to this escalating "information war" as further evidence of the need for aggressive advocacy in journalism. He is supplied with ammunition by writers such as Dale Minor, who express alarm at the "profound conflict . . . between the democratic imperative of full public disclosure and those forces and tendencies which act to constrict, control, and manipulate the information the public gets."[40]

Of course, most journalists are concerned about unnecessary secrecy in government. The activist goes further, however, and appeals to a "libertarian tradition" of press freedom that includes reference to Jefferson's "free market place of ideas, from which the truth would emerge."[41] The essential role of the press is one in which it appears as an instrument for checking on government and meeting basic needs of society. It exists to inform, entertain, sell—but chiefly to help discover truth, and to check on government. The ultimate control of the media is found in the "self-righting process of truth" in the "free market place of ideas."[42]

Most activist journalists do not insist upon a strict libertarian interpretation of their role, however. They establish as the *raison d'etre* of advocacy journalism their own *social responsibility* ideas about how the press should serve the various communities of persons that make up society. They feel that the purpose of government is to serve the needs of the people; yet at the same time they recognize the fact that men in positions of political power may become "scoundrels" and

38. William McGaffin and Erwin Knoll, *Anything But the Truth* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1968), p. 184.

39. See, for example, James Reston, *The Artillery of the Press* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966). Also, Ray Hiebert, ed., *The Press in Washington* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1966) and William L. Rivers, *The Opinion Makers* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1965).

40. Dale Minor, *Op. Cit.*

41. Hvistendahl, *Op. Cit.*

42. See Siebert, Peterson and Schramm, *Four Theories of the Press* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1956). Note, for example, the comparative chart on page 7.

fail to act as servants. Therefore, the press must keep a watchful, suspicious (and cynical) eye on government.

The activist insists that he is standing in the mainstream of the American political tradition, pointing out that even the founding fathers built in an elaborate system of checks and balances in the Federal government because of their belief in man's propensity toward skullduggery. "Power corrupts; and absolute power corrupts absolutely"—it was belief in this element of man's finite and fallible nature that led the much maligned Jefferson to continue to insist on complete freedom of the press.

Libertarians have often used his famous remark about desiring "newspapers without government, rather than government without newspapers" to defend their position. Even though such sentiments must be placed in the proper context of Jefferson's own exasperation with the "lies and slander" of the party press, they do represent a rather consistent position in regard to the role of the press in a free society.

Writing during the most biased and partisan period in the history of American journalism, Jefferson was still able to insist on a free rein for his antagonists:

> . . . I have lent myself willingly as the subject of a great experiment which was to prove that an administration conducting itself with integrity and common understanding cannot be battered down even by the falsehoods of a licentious press, and consequently still less by the press as restrained within the legal and wholesome limits of truth. The experiment was wanting for the world to demonstrate the falsehood of the pretext that freedom of the press is incompatible with ordinary government. I have therefore never even contradicted the thousands of calumnies so industriously propagated against myself. But the fact being once established that *the press is impotent when it abandons itself to falsehood*, I leave to others to restore it to its strength by recalling it within the pale of truth. Within that it is a noble institution, equally the friend of science and of civil liberty.[43]

This, in essence, is a statement of the "self-righting process of truth," which—according to libertarian tradition—will always win out eventually. And this is why the freedom of the press—even a "bad" press—must not be abridged.

43. Letter dated February 11, 1807. See Frank Luther Mott, *American Journalism* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1962), p. 171.

The Task of Political Journalism

What is the role of the political journalist during this turbulent period of history? This writer leans toward the style of activist—or advocacy—reporting, especially when trying to make sense out of political men and public events. The position is one of *responsible realism*, where the reporter sees himself as an *active participant* in the problems of society and not as a passive observer. Not only does he "report" what he sees, he attempts to "explain" the complex events of his times.

Those who abuse positions of power and influence for their own self-serving ends must be exposed for what they are. Liars and charlatans should not be granted the facility of a noncommital "common carrier" press that merely repeats their falsehoods. The mandate of the political journalist is to seek the *truth*—a task that may very well extend beyond mere "objectivity."

Of course, such a position is open to abuse. The possibility exists for a new period of partisan journalism. But one may well ask if the day of the "general publication" is not over. Is there really a mass audience for a detached and objective commom carrier? Many (if not all) of the mass circulation magazines have already begun to limit the scope of their readership, recognizing certain ideas about "mass man" as fictions. Perhaps the newspaper, too, will see that in reality it speaks to limited and defined audiences, and that its appeal has certain defined boundaries.

But it should be pointed out that the activist journalist does not seek to *promote* a particular party line; he seeks to promote effective and responsive government, and to encourage active participation within the political realm. To do this he must be obliged to *actively* and *aggressively* seek the *truth*. This means taking a stand on issues, questioning and criticizing positions and policies, probing into all relevant details and trying to sift out meaning and significance. In other words, the journalist, too, is a *servant* of the people.

This position requires that journalists stop kidding themselves about objectivity and be willing to recognize their own biases. It demands more flexibility in reporting style, encouraging writers to recognize their positions within the functioning framework of government and engage in their tasks openly. There is nothing clandestine about this new emphasis —after all, it has always existed. The important thing now is

to *admit* to its existence and move toward a more *responsible* role in policy-making.

Of course, the activist reporter is a far cry from the "just-write-what-I-say" reporter described in the Nixon Theory of Political Journalism. Neither is he the character described in introductory textbooks on reporting. He is simply a human being who recognizes his own identity in terms of the world about him and realizes that whatever happens to his society happens to him as well. He has a stake in what goes on, and he makes this very clear.

The complex and compelling issues of the 70's demand more than detached objectivity; they demand a genuine commitment to the search for truth. The Indo-China War, the plight of the urban ghetto, the crisis in the environment, the unrest in the Middle East, the constant revolution of Third World peoples—these are issues that cannot be dealt with by remaining detached. Too much depends on the outcome; too much depends on knowing and understanding reality.

In the final analysis, the journalist must admit to himself that he is in fact *not* god. He does not occupy the position of *deus ex machina*, apart, aloof, uncaring and uninvolved. His social identity makes him involved, and his chosen profession demands his commitment.

Book Reviews

The Religion and Culture of Israel. An Introduction to Old Testament Thought. Frank E. Eakin, Jr. Allyn and Bacon. 1971. 335 pp. $7.95.

The author, Associate Professor of Religion at the University of Richmond, brings together two topics which are more usually treated in isolation. Consideration of space thus limits discussion to a small number of "pivotal areas": the exodus event, Hebraic thought structure, deity, cultic concerns and personnel, conflict between Yahwism and Baalism, and the prophetic contribution to biblical religion. Consideration of religion and culture is prefaced, quite properly, with a brief review of Israelite history (49 pp.): the Ancient Near Eastern setting, the major events and figures. The volume is amply footnoted and contains a bibliography after each chapter. Proofreading has generally been careful, save for the occasional instances of Hebrew script. There is a chronological outline, maps, glossary, and indexes (subjects, authors, and biblical passages cited).

The Preface states that the work is intended for use in the classroom and by laymen and clergy. Appropriately, it is clearly written, original languages are almost entirely in transliteration, and secondary sources are limited to those generally available in the English language.

It is not intended as a general introduction to the Old Testament (the volumes by Anderson and Gottwald remain the standard in that area), but it can be a useful supplement at the undergraduate level. Divinity school students will still want to consult Fohrer (religion) and de Vaux (institutions). Usually a range of positions is cited before Eakin states his own conclusion (which is usually done with appropriate caution on most issues).

Despite the need for brevity, the omission of certain data is surprising. Should not a discussion of the prophets, however brief, mention their identification of judgment and grace (especially in the light of James Ward's *Hosea*, which is not cited)? Can an adequate treatment of the conquest-settlement of Canaan omit the revolutionary position of Mendenhall (in the *Biblical Archaeologist*, 25 [1962], pp. 66-87, and more recently in *The Tenth Generation*)? The problem of the relationship of the Sinai event to the rest of Israel's sacral tradition is not treated (M. Noth, G. von Rad). Should not students be aware of the ideas of T. Boman (on the contrast between Greek and Hebrew thought)? This work is cited in the bibliography, but the trenchant criticism of J. Barr is not (e.g., in *Semantics of Biblical Language*). In dealing with pre-Mosaic Yahwism, should not mention be made of the possibility that the cult is derived from that of the Canaanite god El (e.g., by F. Cross in the *Harvard Theological Review*, 55 [1962], pp. 225-259)? Assertions of Universalism in Second Isaiah (pp. 236f.)

surely must reckon with the refutation by H. Orlinsky (e.g., in *The* Seventy Fifth Anniversary Volume of the Jewish Quarterly Review).

Turning from omissions to materials actually covered, the reviewer finds the following positions impossible or at least difficult (fortunately, not many of them are central to the author's purposes): the "low" chronology, e.g., the dating of the beginning of Hammurabi's reign to 1728 B.C. (cr. H. Lewy in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, rev. ed., v. 1, ch. 25); that the golden calf (Exod. 32, I Kings 12) had any connection with Yahwism (pp. 22, 213; cr. *Hebrew Union College Annual*, 42 [1971], pp. 97-115); that Amos' home was Tekoa (p. 26; Amos 1:1 merely says that he dwelled among the Tekoan shepherds [as a migrant]); that Isaiah proclaimed Jerusalem's inviolability (p. 31; cr. Th. Vriezen in *Israel's Prophetic Heritage*, Anderson and Harrelson, eds.); that Nehemiah preceded Ezra (p. 41; cr. M. Smith in *Ex Orbe Religionum*); that the psalter had its final shape by 100 B.C. at the latest (p. 42; cr. J. Sanders' discussion of the materials from Qumran cave 11 in *McCormick Quarterly*, 21 [1968], no. 3); that the name Ishbosheth is an editorial caricature of Ishbaal (pp. 212, 216; actually, *bosheth* is an ancient epithet of fertility deities, meaning "the sexually potent one"); that Isaiah belonged to the elite (p. 227; rather, his Davidic theology, unique among the pre-exilic prophets, made him more acceptable to Judah's politicians); that ancient Near Eastern man did not distinguish between the sacred and the secular (p. 235; in that case, one might wonder about the necessity for the adjective "holy"); that "practically all ancient Near Eastern peoples" were uncertain about the duration of existence in the underworld after death (p. 276; I know of no instance, before the 2nd century, B.C., where a return is held to be even theoretically possible); that Isaiah 26:19 teaches a resurrection of the dead (p. 280; the context makes it quite clear that a national restoration is intended); that the Hinnon Valley became a trash-heap where fires continually burned (p. 281; this is a medieval tradition without literary or archaeological support); and that monotheism necessitated universalism (p. 237; are there no instances to the contrary in the Old Testament?).

The glossary of Hebrew terms contains one unknown to me (*'amar*, "thought, speech") and one which is given a traditional but well-known erroneous meaning (*'el Sadday*, as "God Almighty" rather than "the One of the Mountain(s)").

—Lloyd Bailey

Politics, Medicine, and Christian Ethics—A Dialogue With Paul Ramsey. Charles E. Curran. Fortress. 1973. 228 pp. $6.95.

Charles Curran has undertaken, according to the subtitle of *Politics, Medicine, and Christian Ethics*, to engage Paul Ramsey in dialogue; and in four chapters Curran treats topically "Politics, Christian Ethics, and the Church" (i.e., theological and ethical considerations of church-

state relations), "The Just War and Other Specific Questions" (e.g., revolution, nuclear deterrence, conscientious objection, and civil disobedience), "Medical Ethics" (specifically abortion, experimentation, transplantation, and death), and "Genetics and the Future of Man" (e.g., gene therapy, genetic and reproductive engineering, and the like).

Because Fr. Curran has chosen these topics and organized them in this way, it is well-nigh impossible—within the narrow limits of a brief review—to do more to inform you of the content of his book than recite these subjects. Moreover, Professor Ramsey's work is itself far-ranging, intricate, and complex—and not easily given to simple and concise summary. The addition of Curran's commentary and criticism merely confounds further any serious effort to get to a neat and disentangled "core."

But that is a problem one encounters in reading this book as well as trying to review it. And the reason, I think, is principally that Curran really has not engaged Ramsey in conversation in this essay; instead, he has attempted to restate, topically and serially, the main body of Ramsey's writings while interlacing and concluding each chapter (or topic) with his own critique. Frequently Curran interjects "my position" or "my approach," or sometimes "I differ" or "I disagree"; but he does this in ways which do not often instruct the reader as to what the real or imagined differences are. The result is that these demurrers, together with the brief concluding counterpoint, function chiefly as a kind of languid *caveat emptor*. One example: "I do not accept as great a distinction between acts of commission and acts of omission in this case as Ramsey does." (p. 161)

Curran would have done better, I think, to have undertaken less and argued his own positions more thoroughly. As it stands, the author more often just declares "I don't see" or "my view is different" than develops a cogent and telling rebuttal. Thus it is not always clear whether the reader is getting Ramsey, or Ramsey à la Curran, or Curran. Indeed my involvement in the text was often interrupted by the thought that this, despite extensive footnotes, was dubious exegesis and exposition of Ramsey *qua* Ramsey. Perhaps it is a measure of my disappointment that I think an exhibition of Ramsey is better sought in the primary sources—for all the turgid and convoluted prose that awaits one there!

There are fundamental conflicts between Curran and Ramsey, however, and there need be no doubt about that. From chapter 1 onward Curran himself acknowledges these in a variety of ways: Ramsey's too-radical Christocentrism vs. Curran's natural law, or Ramsey's deontological vs. Curran's teleological emphasis, or Ramsey's pessimistic vs. Curran's optimistic estimate of man, or Ramsey's "Christian" vs. Curran's "human" approach to moral problems. In many ways—and despite Curran's claim that Roman Catholic ethics is not a monolithic system or that, in the future, it will be increasingly difficult to draw a strict dichotomy between Roman Catholic and Protestant ethics—this

book is a clear example of the enormous gulf between Roman Catholic and Protestant ethics, which remains to be bridged.

Now I know that these things ought not to be casually said, as I also know how easy it is to suppose that they are that because of the brief and summary way in which I am obliged to frame these observations. But to deal thoroughly with what I judge to be the problems in Curran's work would entail, quite literally, another book—this time, Smith on Curran on Ramsey! Charles Curran is an old and valued friend and, as a score of other books testify, an able theologian, ethicist, and author. But reviewers (and friends!) owe it (as Howard Cosell is fond of saying) to "tell it like it is"—even at the risk (as Cosell is equally loathe to admit) of being very mistaken in the telling of it. *Dimittee mihi peccata mea.*

—Harmon L. Smith

The Subversion of Women as Practiced by Churches, Witch-Hunters, and Other Sexists, Nancy van Vuuren. Westminster, 1973. 190 pp. $5.95.

The premise of the book, *The Subversion of Women*, is that women unconsciously bear the "Traits Due to Victimization" discussed in Gordon Allport's *The Nature of Prejudice*, and that these traits are both a means to power for the oppressed and a means to self-destruction by the oppressed. As one of those women thus characterized, I have to admit that this analysis generally rings true, and I especially admire the author's concluding chapter where she becomes specific about ways in which women can change themselves and society can become more liberating for both men and women.

It is with the part of the book between "Introduction" and "Conclusion" that I am uneasy. Ms. van Vuuren tries to cover an astonishing amount of ground in less than two hundred pages: the place of women in the Judeo-Christian tradition; historical and psychological factors relating to "witches" and their persecutors; how sexism has oppressed women in all aspects of life; and what must be done by women and by society to help correct this oppression. It is frustrating to read all this because so many conclusions are drawn without documentation that one does not feel the book can be trusted.

In addition, many important problems are merely touched upon and dismissed quickly and, I suspect, unfairly. For example, p. 25: "The coming of the Messiah did not liberate women . . . . Jesus surrounded himself with men, according to the Bible, and never had a personal friendship or sexual contact with a woman. He did take note of particular women, though, and was sympathetic to them, responding to them as persons. But those women tended to be those who professed guilt and sin for sexual drives or women who served men." (One is tempted to ask, "What other kinds of women were there?") This is too brief and simplistic a treatment of Jesus' relationship with women, an issue about which whole books are being written these days.

This is not to say that all the conclusions reached in the book are erroneous. Nancy van Vuuren is a professional woman who has been involved in many studies

and discussions related to the women's movement, and she is at present the president of Pennsylvanians for Women's Rights. In addition, she is an intelligent and sensitive observer, and this is evident in her statements. However, one needs to know something of the process by which these conclusions were reached in order to take them seriously.

The Subversion of Women could be used for discussion in a women's group led by a skillful interpreter, and I believe that an individual woman would find parts of the book helpful for self-understanding and self-realization. But this is not the book that needs to be written for Christian women and for the men in their lives (including their ministers)!

—Harriet Leonard
Reference Librarian
Divinity School Library

The Way of All the Earth: Experiments in Truth and Religion. John S. Dunne. Macmillan. 1972. 240 pp. $6.95.

Father Dunne of the University of Notre Dame is currently widely hailed as one of the most important living theologians. In one earlier book he dealt with the problem of death by comparing the Christian answer to death with answers found in various Asian cultures (*The City of the Gods*). He next, in *A Search for God in Time and Memory*, pursued his concern to understand the life story of man through depicting various biographical and autobiographical standpoints in such persons as Paul, Augustine and Kierkegaard. Here he began using the phrase "passing over" to describe how one can "pass over" to another life or culture and return enriched and ennobled. This requires sympathetic understanding based first of all on the common humanity we all possess.

In this new book he guides us in the adventure of crossing over to lives of persons in other faiths—"Passing over to religions"—and he compares Gandhi and Jesus, Gautama and Jesus, introduces us to the Krishna of the *Gita*, etc., including such figures as Muhammad and Dag Hammarskjöld. The title, *The Way of All the Earth*, implies once again a common humanity and commonality in all religions. His approach is essentially that of the Roman Catholic teaching of natural theology. In the first half of the book, "A God in Disguise," he finds the Christian revelation reflected in other faiths. In Part II, "A Journey with God," he discusses parallel lives in the human adventure through time. Of course in the end one is expected to return to the true faith, Christianity.

When I first started through this book I stopped midway because I found that, although Dunne's writing reflects wide reading and deep personal reflection, his grasp of other faiths and lives bristles with misunderstandings and misinterpretations. I completed the book when I learned that Dunne was to be on a panel discussing this book at an American Academy of Religion meeting in Chicago.

Today in the U. S. there are about 1200 persons teaching Asian religions. In November, 1973, about seventy-five of us sat in on an afternoon session where Father Dunne and two experts

in Asian Religions—one a Roman Catholic scholar—held a conversation. The result was devastating because the consensus of the two experts and the participants in the audience was that John Dunne does not really understand Asian religions, to say nothing of the careers of Gautama, Krishna, Muhammad, Gautama, Gandhi, or even Hammarskjöld.

Theologians are constantly searching for new ways to package old truths. I can in no way recommend this book as a reliable way to better self-understanding by means of a guided tour to pass over to other faiths and return to one's own circle of faith. There are better ways available.

—David G. Bradley

Mysticism: Its Meaning and Message. Georgia Harkness. Abingdon. 1973. 192 pp. $5.50.

In the West mysticism has for long been downgraded by teachers and spokesmen for mainline Protestantism. The reasons for this are obvious if one starts to list them. It has been declared dangerous because it usually finds expression in the claims of an individual to have had an extraordinary personal experience which is difficult to certify or keep under orthodox control. It is feared because such an experience might represent the work of demonic forces. Thus I was taught that there is no *true* mysticism in the Bible, and trained to be very careful around those following a mystical tradition, whether it be the ancient gnostics or modern Christian Scientists. My own experience in seminary, graduate training and in teaching over the past thirty-five years, has been that there is a dynamism at work here that presents us with a challenge and also has a genuine fascination. It also is a neglected field that is of real importance in our work of teaching, preaching and counselling.

Over thirty years ago I was in a small seminar at Garrett Seminary under Georgia Harkness when she first began to articulate some of her research, thinking and concerns in this area. Her new book, *Mysticism*, is a mature result of her continuing teaching and study. As with all her work it reflects her joy in teaching and concern to communicate her knowledge and insights. In part I she lays the groundwork for her study with three chapters on "Definitions and Distinctions," "Mysticism and the Bible" and "Philosophical Grounds of Mysticism." Although her presentation is quite predictable and traditional, she does blur possible distinctions between the God of the Bible and "Ultimate Reality" as a term employed in philosophy. She also is careful to stress that the best sort of mysticism is that which finds its goal in *communion* with the deity rather than in a union which involves the total loss of self in the Ultimate. She also reflects traditional thought with a typical dictum, "Nevertheless, I do not think we can say that Jesus was a mystic." (p. 42) This makes one wonder about Moses on Mt. Sinai, Peter having a vision of his risen Lord, etc.

Part II is a manual of introduction to important Christian mystics as well as the classics associated with them. These five chap-

ters take up a score of mystics from St. Augustine to Dag Hammarskjöld. Useful and interesting vignettes are offered of the careers and writings of these persons. The final chapter, "Neo-Mysticism Today," treats such topics as the occult, drug mysticism, Vedanta, Zen and the "Jesus Movement."

One is warned to be careful when choosing a *guru*, and several comments are in order to help describe Harkness's point of view. She is first a Protestant in the rational tradition and she is constantly concerned to warn her readers against the blandishments of Roman Catholicism, even to the point of discovering that the best medieval mystics were precursors of the Reformation. Her treatment of non-Christian traditions, while accurately reported, fails to grasp what some of these other faiths are concerned with. To label early Buddhism as "atheistic" or as "essentially an ethical system," to regard the Hindu concept of *maya* as claiming the world to be "illusory," or to refer to the Zen teaching of Emptiness as lacking "the breakthrough of the Christian Trinity," while based on statements often made by Western writers do have built-in limitations. They also smack of the discredited approach of the older Comparative Religions school which set Christianity as the standard against which to judge all other faiths. It is my own position that mysticism as a phenomenon is found in all religious traditions, but also that each mystic interprets his special experience both as his *guru* has taught him to understand it and judge all other faiths. It is my own position that mysticism as a phenomenon is found in all religious traditions, but also that each mystic interprets his special experience both as his *guru* has taught him to understand it and also in the wider context of his own faith. In this sense Dr. Harkness has once more placed us in her debt with a most useful introduction to Western Protestant mysticism.

—David G. Bradley

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Women in Seminary

by MARTHA MONTAGUE WILSON

(Ed. Note: Martha Wilson has served as Guest Editor for this special issue of the *Review*. Martha, an ordained member of the Western North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church, has received the B.A. and M. Div. degrees from Duke, as well as the M.S.L.S. from UNC, Chapel Hill, and is currently a student in the Religion Ph.D. program at Duke.)

Why do women go to seminary? The reasons are as numerous as the increasing numbers of women who are seeking admission to seminary at Duke and other seminaries around the country. In 1972, the American Association of Theological Schools reported that out of 29,034 Master of Divinity students, 2,858 were women. Five years ago, the Division of Ordained Ministry of the United Methodist Church had the names of fifty women who were interested in seminary. By 1972, the Division listed over seven hundred names. Currently, there are over five hundred women in United Methodist seminaries. Forty-eight are enrolled in Duke Divinity School.

The articles in this issue have been gathered to reflect the diversity of personal perspectives and vocational goals which bring women to seminary, to indicate the influence of women on seminary and seminary on women, and to offer some resources for individual and group thought and exploration of the role of women in church and society. Besides the contributions which specifically concern women in seminary, several articles have been chosen as examples of work done by women while in seminary. Not all of these concern women. These have been included to emphasize that women are entering into every phase of seminary life and that in the future more and more women will be seeking to participate in all phases of ministry.

My thanks for the issue go to all the women, past, present, and future, whose presence in seminary makes issues like this one necessary. Thanks also to the editorial committee of *The Duke Divinity School Review* for the good support.

Why Do Women Go to Seminary?

(Ed. Note: The presentations which follow are not intended as abstract essays on a general topic but rather as individual personal reflections.)

* * * *

JANE K. WHITE-STEVENS

(M.Div. 1971)

I am an ordained elder and a full member of the Wisconsin Conference of the United Methodist Church. This is my third year as pastor of a three-point charge.

Yet, as I look back on my past, I know that I had never seriously considered the parish ministry until the end of my middle year in seminary. As a child I would say to myself, "If I were a boy, I would be a minister." But being a girl, and not even having met a clergywoman, I never expressed my thoughts aloud. I had a strong desire to serve the church, however (and a stronger urge to see the world). In 1964, after university and a year of teaching, I became a short-term missionary in Malaysia. It was in Malaysia that I caught a vision of the church and what it could be. I was part of a uniquely alive fellowship in which both women and men took active roles. It was here too that I made a real commitment to Jesus Christ.

Upon returning to this country in December 1967, I enrolled in the graduate school in guidance counseling (Duke University) and taught school, as I had always intended to do. But I missed being actively involved in the mission and life of the church. The summer of 1968 I was an itinerant missionary for the Board of Missions. Through these contacts and others, I was offered two jobs; one in Christian Education and one in Church and Community work. It was at this point that I realized

my calling was to a church vocation. Late in the summer of 1968 I enrolled in the Divinity School and entered in the Fall of 1968.

WHERE I AM NOW:

I am very well accepted by the congregation here, both men and women. I think some women have consciously or unconsciously identified with my view of womanhood. In the last year or so several have made decisions to go to college for the first time or take up a career. Perhaps too, a woman in the ministry is more prone to adopt a participatory style of leadership and thus enable the laity to assume a more active role in the total ministry of the church. This is one way members have expressed the difference in my ministry from that of my predecessor. I sense too that being a woman I am freed of some of the stereotypes of ministers and allowed to be more human. Almost everyone quite naturally calls me "Jane" and yet I feel I am respected. I am accepted as a counselor best by women, as may be expected, but I am very encouraged by the openness of today's young men in their teens and twenties. Also, the longer I remain here, the more I feel the men in general respect my counsel.

Those who shared with me the agonies of my attempt to be accepted into this annual conference in the spring of 1971 would be glad to know that I have not only been accepted now but also been given positions of responsibility and authority. Through The United Methodist Women's Caucus in 1972, I was nominated to the General Council on Ministries. It was their intention that among the members at large there ought to be at least one woman clergy. In the Wisconsin Conference I presently serve on the Conference Council on Ministries, the Commission on the Status and Role of Women (which I helped push through in the 1973 Annual Conference), my District Committee on Ministry, and our Conference Program and Arrangements Committee. In the latter, I am chairperson of the task force organized to train members (delegates) for Annual Conference this June.

I think Wisconsin is more progressive than some annual conferences. Our Bishop is very sensitive to the Woman Issue and very willing to do what he can to ensure equal appointments for women in the ministry. There are three other women who are elders and full members here. We also have three women

who are deacons. All of us have been expected to serve on Conference Boards. I have had some support from the other clergywomen and even more from the officers of our conference United Methodist Women.

* * * *

Julie Bethel Forringer

(M.Div. 1971; Th.M. 1973; United Methodist East Ohio Conference, ordained)

An outsider might wonder why in the world I spent the last five years in seminary, Clinical Pastoral Education and in a Master of Theology program which specialized in pastoral counseling. For here I am spending this year at home with my baby boy enjoying motherhood to its fullest. Some would say I was just being frivolous and am now "fulfilling my role as a woman." Others might think I have copped out on my professional life.

The inside story is much more complex. My primary goal is to fulfill my highest human potential and for me this means being a person with several different modes of expressing love: as a wife, a mother, a minister, and a friend. I wasn't sure what I was searching for when I came to Duke Divinity School, but I was searching.

Personally, seminary gave me a chance to get to know myself, to complete the adolescent task of separating from parental and external expectations and values, and to find my own. In a broad sense religion deals with the meaning of life and making sense out of life's basic questions, so in dealing with these issues formally in school, one can also grow personally. Seminary introduced me to Clinical Pastoral Education which was the most important catalyst to help me become a confident woman aware of my nurturing potential. Growth took place in relationships with peers, professors, supervisors, and patients, and in the process I learned experientially the loving process which is the life of the Christian community and the heart of the Christian message. Expressed theologically this experience freed me from the bondage of sin, fear, doubt, and guilt, and freed me for love and life in the Spirit.

Professionally, seminary opened my eyes to all kinds of new possibilities (apart from the traditional feminine roles of nurse,

teacher, and secretary). Field work and work-study experiences such as summer work in a local church, chaplaincy in an institution for the mentally retarded, patient-care work in a hospital, and counseling work with the Pastoral Counseling Service, put me in touch with my own talents and the academic study balanced the clinical experience, each making the other more real. By the time I graduated from seminary I could see the possibility of a career in the ministry and with two additional years of chaplaincy and counseling training my professional, pastoral identity became much firmer.

But my professional goals were not my only goals. I was ready to be a mother. The experience of motherhood this year, instead of being an interruption seems now to be a part of the whole process. In my pastoral counseling this experience will be invaluable. I plan to continue my professional career as a pastoral counselor, part-time at first while my children are small, then more-time ("full-time" is a poor word because I don't plan to give all my time to any one mode of my life.) Combining and balancing the different modes I have of expressing love continues to be a struggle and challenge to me.

* * * *

Beverly Roberts Gaventa

(Union, N.Y.C., M.Div. 1973; first year student in Duke Ph.D. program in N.T. Studies)

When I entered seminary in the fall of 1970, it was with the usual fear and anxiety about a new situation and a new place. Still, just underneath that nervousness was the conviction that I, Beverly Ann Roberts, would eventually be recognized as "the" woman scholar. I viewed myself as "different" from other women and really believed that I was more "like a man" in my goals and aspirations.

What I found was a shock: I was not the "only" woman. There were, indeed, about twenty of us out of a hundred entering students. Not only that, but we rather quickly learned how much we had in common. First of all, our small number meant that there were often only one or two women in any class. Thus, one could expect the usual comments about "how nice it is to have a lovely rose among the thorns." Also, all of us worked in some church or community organi-

zation as part of our first year requirements, where we often encountered prejudice in tasks assigned us and in attitudes toward us. Finally, with our fellow students we encountered various attitudes, ranging from forthright statements on why women should *not* be ministers to the cool neglect of those who simply never allowed themselves to be engaged in serious conversation with women. Given this variety of pressures, we who happened to be women found out how much we had to share with one another. Each of us gladly gave up our notions of uniqueness in order to gain the mutual support we all needed.

In the past three years, the increased number of women in seminaries has meant that the situation described above *may* no longer be quite so severe. Nevertheless, my experience certainly affected my conception of myself as a scholar. I feel a special responsibility to other women, which never occurred to me prior to M.Div. work. The questions and struggles of women who are pastors, scholars, students, and laywomen press upon me. I also have a share in the responsibility for raising questions of the Biblical texts regarding women and their roles; questions which have been ignored, for the most part, by previous generations of scholars.

These tasks have presented themselves to me because I, a woman, studied in a seminary. They are only part of the total effect theological training has had on me and on my view of what it means to be a scholar. Still, a profound change has taken place in my self-understanding for which my seminary training and, especially, the women with whom I studied are largely responsible.

* * * *

SUSAN THISTLETHWAITE

(M.Div. Senior)

Seminary education was for me less a decision than an evolution. When in high school, I had selected law as a career goal because at the time it seemed to bother the adults I knew. The insufficiency of that motivation soon became clear. By the end of my sophomore year, I was fairly fed up with pre-law. A course in Introduction to Religion that spring had held my interest and I found I could do the work. My major seemed to decide itself.

During my senior year at college, however, I developed more than a passing interest in New Testament criticism and a parallel disgust with most methods of Education. It occurred to me that I could combine the two—the interest and the disgust—and go into religious education. As my future husband and I shopped for graduate schools, he in medicine and I in divinity, we hit upon Duke as having the most of what we both desired.

Another evolution took place during my first year of seminary. I had entered in the M.R.E. program with no inclinations whatever towards ministerial vocation. But the weakness of the M.R.E. program (as it was then arranged), combined with several bad field education experiences as a Director of Christian Education, more than convinced me that the key issue for a woman and a religious educator is one of authority. Unless the religious educator evidences in his/her own life this centrality of education to the life of the church, then s/he often becomes the proprietor of a very peripheral and lifeless church "educational program." These problems are intensified when the religious educator is also a woman, with additional questions of authority in the ministry.

It slowly came to me that everything the church is and does educates the congregation and the world; I developed some vague vocational aims. I transferred from the M.R.E. program to the M.Div. and began working full-time as a Director of Religious Education.

The question of ordination was a difficult one for me to face and I still sometimes feel self-conscious about being ordained. As an undergraduate, I had studied with a religion professor who felt strongly that ordination should be eliminated entirely. Since I respect him greatly, I have had to meet his very apt objections. Yet I have also been influenced by him in my choice of denomination; the view of ordination in the United Church of Christ seems to me to avoid many of the objectionable aspects of ordination as "separate and special calling." Ordination within the United Church of Christ is regarded as conferred by persons on persons as they profess to assume a helping role in the world. There is less emphasis on "the tradition of the saints" and more on working out a life of service, wherever that may lead one. I feel comfortable with that distinction. Where I still feel self-conscious about my ordained status is as others' expectations of

what that implies impinge upon my own, and obviously different, understanding.

I see my future goals as relating to this evolutionary process. Nothing, I feel, is ever lost. My desired goal is to keep changing my goals in order to enlarge my perspectives. If I am able, I should like to always be ready to scrap all my grooves when they become rigid and un-liberating and move on.

* * * *

SALLY L. CAMPBELL

(M.Div. junior; Presbyterian Church,U.S.)

To reach back and put labels on motivating factors for my coming to seminary is a difficult task because of at least two things. One, I selectively remember what I thought and felt while making up my mind and, two, I have changed my reasons for coming and now no longer regard as valid some of the strongest reasons admitted to myself if not to others. Taken together, this means that what I say now I probably would not have said two years ago, and it means that I am probably still changing and redefining my reasons for preparing for professional ministry.

Underneath what I trust is a faith-full statement that would apply to both my initial reasons for considering the ministry and those of which I am conscious now, that is, that I have come to seminary in response to God's work in my life, there is an undertone of what might be called reaction. I am more aware now of my conscious movement away from the evangelical tradition in which I came to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and to first acknowledge a call to ministry. The movement away was almost proportional to the sureness of call I felt and how vocal I was about it in the fellowship of Christians, particularly at college. I received very negative feedback to the idea of a woman in the ministry from precisely those people who had nurtured my faith. I could not understand their point of view, seeing the need for pastor-teachers in the Church, yet I was so shaped by the tradition that I was uncomfortable with my own tentative decision to buck the tide and come to seminary.

I can recall very distinctly the time in my junior year when this reaction to the norms that were being laid on me by

my immediate associates in the Christian fellowship reminded me of the label "creative nonconformist" that I had been given by a counselor interpreting the results of a psychological test that all freshmen took. He had told me that I enjoyed doing things in unusual ways too much to be happy as a secondary school English teacher which had continued, despite his warning, to be my goal through at least my junior year. I can see my reaction to the counselor in my freshman year as well: so what if I am different from other English teachers? I might even be a better teacher for not following the normal ways of doing things. But by junior year I had talked with more teachers and had seen the frustrations they experienced as they spent most of their time in disciplining and in following set curricula so that the students would achieve high SAT scores. This did not seem to be the kind of teaching I had envisioned, which involved teaching values through literature and taking time with individual students to work through problems that might not have had to do with the grammar of their two-page papers on the characterization in *Julius Caesar*. The closely related field of guidance counselling also turned me off because the counselors I saw seemed more concerned with giving tests and getting people admitted to colleges than with really counselling. The counselling I had received in high school reflected the value system of a secular culture which preached what's-in-it-for-me and not the idea of self-giving service to God and man which informed the Christian Theology which I was being drawn into.

While questioning this proposed change of vocational direction, I became involved with the women's movement and consequently reacted again to what I saw to be society's programming of me into the female role. *I* wanted to be a *person*. This came out in renewed hostility toward my Christian friends as I did some exegetical work and found out that there were alternate ways of looking at key Scriptures used to put down women.

I was encouraged in this re-examination of Scripture by the only woman in the ministry I knew. She had just switched from her job as a chaplain to associate pastor in a suburban church not far from my home, so I grabbed the first chance I had to talk with her. She pointed out Scriptures which emphasized the new relationship between male and female in Christ and also said I might have to minister to those

people who would accept me, not necessarily people like the ones in my college fellowship. I spent a whole day with her trying to find a reason why women should not or could not be ministers, but she shot down all my objections. Her *being* a minister in the face of so much hostility was as convincing to me as anything else. She was a woman *and* a minister. She ministered quietly and, from what I could see, effectively because she had the assurance of a real gift of the Spirit for use in the Body of Christ. And she prayed with me that God would also give me that assurance if I were to become a minister and that I would trust him to work out the details.

That encounter was the start of a different attitude in me. I began to respond more than to react. I smiled more often at a teasing reference to women in ministry instead of getting my back up and discussed issues more than sermonized. I saw some real fruit come from my ministry on campus as the leader of a small group which met for Bible study, prayer, and sharing and also from training small group leaders. These and other situations gave me confidence in my abilities to teach and counsel and administer. I began making friends outside my conservative tradition who did not share even the remnants of my hang-ups about the "place" of women and so experienced some very necessary affirming of myself as a person and of my consideration of ministry as a vocation. And I did an independent study project on Quaker women ministers in America in the 17th-19th centuries and again got a dose of actual women *doing* ministry, even though their theology was quite different from mine.

In the end my decision to come to seminary was a response to my associate pastor's working through with me a method of decision-making which emphasized clarifying objectives before generating alternatives. Instead of agonizing over whether to go to graduate school in education or psychology or to teach or to come to seminary, I made a list of what I wanted to accomplish. I listed such activities that I wished to engage in as teaching and counselling and relating to people of many different ages and backgrounds in an atmosphere where I could share my faith openly and help them to work out the implications of radical discipleship in the context of personal development and involvement in society. The min-

istry won hands down. And my friend's prayer *is* being answered: the assurance continues to deepen and the details are working out.

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ANN H. BURGER

(M.Div. junior; Presbyterian Church, U.S.)

Be it a reflection of the mysterious workings of Providence or simply a woefully poor memory, I cannot relate precisely how I came to the decision to go to seminary. Moreover, having made the decision to apply for admission, I cannot say what *specific* vocational goals I foresaw the Divinity School experience serving. I make that confession with considerable uneasiness, and perhaps a trace of self-defensiveness, for I have just read the fall edition of the *Duke Divinity School Review* in which Professor John Bergland has stated his conviction that "ministers should be quite intentional about their career goals." To the extent that a single-mindedness of purpose implies a serious faith, and to the extent that the lure of a well-defined professional role can make studies more attractive, I am in agreement with Professor Bergland. However, I cannot but think that there should be a place in seminaries—as there presently seems to be at Duke—for those like myself who, while forced to be equivocal regarding specific vocational goals, are nonetheless *un*equivocal in their commitment to learning and to ministering to others. On the one hand, considerations of my husband's career demands, an awareness of my own personal limitations, and a realistic appraisal of the chances for a woman being called to a Presbyterian Church, U.S., pulpit make it necessary for me to be flexible in setting vocational goals. On the other hand, an appreciation of the variety of contexts within which a professionally-trained minister (ordained or not) can serve effectively makes that uncertainty easier to live with . . . at least for the present.

As to the experiences which contributed to my decision, I can only suggest rather vaguely that it was the combined result of several factors, probably the most important of which was exposure to the Christian faith through those from whom it most counts—my family. The thought of undertaking theolog-

ical study, however, never entered my mind until my studies in Soviet politics were interrupted in 1969 by the Selective Service Administration. While accompanying my husband around the country on military assignments and attempting to complete my reading in preparation for examinations, I began to feel a certain discomfiture with my studies and with myself. I sensed that I was not quite "touching bottom," that the social sciences were not dealing with the questions I personally found most compelling, and that I was not being prepared to serve people at what I am convinced is their deepest level of need. Yet I was reluctant to consider theological education. I had a naive notion that, since faith is not a cerebral matter, the study of religion could be no more than an "intellectual" pursuit, as fascinating perhaps as my earlier studies, but not necessarily any more personally satisfying or vocationally relevant.

Nevertheless, I began to read in the area of theology, particularly works by people whose personal experience reflected a lively and thorough-going faith, not only an intellectual grasp of theological issues. Gradually it dawned on me that the study of the sources and development of religious thought, however many questions it raises and leaves unanswered, can be spiritually invigorating, not necessarily paralyzing. I had been (and am) convinced that the only genuine faith is an "experiential" faith, but with a peculiar short-sightedness, I had failed to realize that the mind is as much a part of one's experience as the heart.

Sometime between 1969 and 1971, while my husband and I were actively involved in a church in North Dakota and closely associated with its minister and his family, the desire to study theology and the desire to serve in the ministry converged into a decision to enter the seminary. Although I have been here only a little less than a year, I do not think it premature to say that the Divinity School has surpassed my expectations. In fact, I am still on occasion struck by the novelty of an academic environment in which most of the students seem genuinely to want more out of graduate education than a degree, most of the instructors seem to be both demanding and sensitive to individual difficulties, and most of the course work is not the kind that can easily be left behind in the classroom.

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LINDA D. WOFFORD

(M.Div. junior; Presbyterian Church, U.S.)

My decision to enter Divinity School was precipitated by the same basic factors I see reflected in the stories of many fellow students—with the addition of the special factors which give encouragement and support to a woman. Even the remote possibility of a theological education never occurred to me until my senior year of undergraduate school when my concern for the calibre of the clergy was suddenly juxtaposed to my own career plans. Previously I had examined areas like psychology, teaching, and social work as possible "helping professions," but repeatedly I was dissatisfied with these languages as modes of dealing with human experience; these languages were always horizontal—never vertical. In the meantime I first considered seminary as a route to a career in academia, perhaps in relation to my interest in literature; since my first serious work in religion was an outgrowth of my fascination with Milton's poetry, the connection between religion and literature seemed perfectly natural to me.

Yet another force was at work—the desire to leave the cloister, to be actively engaged in the life of ministry. My working year between college and seminary further proved the challenge of being engaged with the world in theological dialogue; it also revealed my own need for further training in theology as well as counseling and organizing skills. This experience helped me identify with the life situation of the typical layperson as I participated in that life and began to ask the inevitable questions about the connection between the Christian faith and the alien world in which it must flourish.

When asked "Why are you in a seminary?", in addition to the issues of my vocation (both my call to be here and my plans for the future), I am obliged to acknowledge the social change which allowed me to follow this route. Obviously without the influence of the women's movement the school would not be so open to my admission. Furthermore, without the support of other women struggling to be fulfilled persons, I probably would not have had the confidence to undertake a life of professional ministry. Throughout my period of initial decision I drew my strongest personal encouragement from a group of women committed to a search for personal and corporate identity. My belief in the liberation of the Christian life

perhaps became real only as I was able to work it out in a particular form of liberation.

I look forward to a life of flexibility and change in types of ministry as the needs of the Christian community and of myself slowly change. Part of my excitement about theological education is generated by the variety of options available—parish ministry, institutional chaplaincy, teaching. I anticipate excursions into several of these areas in the course of my career, searching for learning and giving experiences.

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ELIZABETH LITTLETON

(Duke Undergraduate junior; Southern Baptist)

For several years I have considered seminary training the most natural and comfortable step that I, as a religion major interested in some form of church work, could take following graduation. This general calling to church work has recently become more defined in a desire to work on the foreign mission field. With this in mind, I can see that my undergraduate years are leaving me with a void of practical experience—that is, the experience of working with people on a day to day basis. On the one hand, seminary might be a very good place for me to gain some of this experience. On the other hand, I sometimes fear that three more years in seminary will simply mean more time at my desk thinking and studying.

Thus the prospect of going to divinity school can no longer be just a "comfortable" step toward a career in church work. Instead, living and working in a seminary community for several years becomes a mission field experience in itself. Just as teachers and fellow students are helping me to formulate a theology and come to grips with its practical application in my daily life, I, too, am giving of myself in active ministry to those around me. Thus I have come to envision seminary as a mutually ministering experience. As I am being stretched intellectually and spiritually, I will experience real growth.

More concretely, because the academic factor of seminary is acutely time-demanding, I see the seminary student's immediate ministry as more of an attitude than a role to play—an attitude marked by a hunger for oneself and for others to

know God intimately. This concern may be manifested in everything from counselling juvenile delinquents to Christian political reform; however, the cornerstone of such work remains a desire to share with others the fullness of God and to learn of His fullness from them.

Thus I look to seminary training as an ideal situation of active preparation. Yes, I will be preparing for the future, as well as giving myself time to mature both spiritually and emotionally before I work in more demanding situations. Concurrently, through a consciousness of daily ministry in the seminary community, I will be learning how I can best use my gifts to build up others in a relationship with God.

Impossible-Possibility

by LETTY M. RUSSELL*

In my undergraduate days at Wellesley College I used to process with the choir at daily and Sunday chapel, up the aisle, toward a chancel where the words *non ministrari, sed ministrare* were written in huge letters across the upper wall. Each time I looked at those words, no matter how bleary-eyed or distractedly, *I believed*—believed that this life style of Jesus (not to be ministered unto, but to minister) had something to do with my own life style and with why I was at college.

Today the words, although in modern English are still with us. Our text, Mark 10:45, reads: *not to be served, but to serve.* But for all of us, I think, they have become more of a *problem* than a *possibility*:

> They are a *problem for Christians* because the very word *service* has become so debased in our culture that most people think of it, at best, as a sort of "band-aid" approach to helping others and, at worst, as a "cop-out" from working for a just society.
> They are a *problem for women*, Blacks, and other Third World groups because service is identified with *subordination*, powerlessness and oppression.
> They are a *problem for ministers and laity* because we have created a class of professional "ministers" who serve in structures which deprive the whole People of God of their own responsible servanthood or ministry.

Yet here are the words (Mark 10:42-45):

> "And Jesus called them to him and said to them, 'You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over

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* Sermon delivered in Duke University Chapel on March 31, 1974. Texts: Isa. 52:13-15, Mk. 10:35-45. Dr. Russell is Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at Manhattan College and Lecturer in Women's Studies at Yale University Divinity School. Her new book, *Human Liberation in a Feminist Perspective: A Theology*, will be published next fall by Westminster Press.

them. But it shall not be so among you: but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.' "

And here is the *life style* of Jesus of Nazareth who came to serve and give his life as a ransom for the world. This *impossible* idea of service is in fact the *only possibility* for those who would follow Jesus.

I. THIS SEEMINGLY IMPOSSIBLE ROLE OF SERVICE IS *POSSIBLE* FOR US ALL BECAUSE IT IS NOT JUST A COMMAND. *IT IS A GIFT OF GOD.*

Service is God's gift because it is God who serves us.

Think of it. This God of the Hebrew-Christian tradition is like no other gods! *God* is the one who chooses to serve, not just to be worshipped or adored. Other gods have been revealed so that women and men could *serve them.* This God (the God of the Suffering Servant: the God of Jesus Christ) begins from the other end. God comes to the people, to liberate them so that they may celebrate their freedom by sharing it with others!

In God's service we see what Karl Barth calls the *humanity of God.* God is first of all, not a king, sitting on a pyramid of the world—creating pyramids of domination and subjugation in the hierarchies of church and society. Rather the humanity of God is seen in that God chooses to be related to human beings through service (Barth, *The Humanity of God*).

No wonder our passage from Isaiah 52 says that the servant of Yahweh will *startle* the nations:

"His appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the sons of men—so shall he startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him" (14b-15a). The servant cannot even be recognized because suffering service is not even expected of a messianic figure by those in high places!

Service is also God's gift because Jesus not only

calls his disciples to serve, but also provides the power and possibility of carrying this out.

In Jesus Christ we have the *representation of a new humanity*—the beginning of a new type of human being whose life is lived for others. Jesus came as *Immanuel* (God with us): to be with all people—the women as well as the men: the ignorant as well as the learned; the outcasts as well as the religiously acceptable; the oppressed as well as the oppressors.

Jesus helps us to see the Humanity of God so that we too can become *representatives of new humanity.* Here we see what it means to be *truly* and *newly* human. This *is* the image of God—freedom to serve others. This is the image into which humanity is created and redeemed.

The whole story of the New Testament revolves around this one one theme—*diakonia* (service). At last someone has come, not to be served, but to serve! Everything that was done by this Son of man, including humiliation, self-emptying, cross, death, is summarized in one *final communique*: *service* (Hoekendijk, *Horizons of Hope*). This communique is offered as gift and promise. The disciples of Jesus are called to be servants; to be liberated for others.

II. GOD'S INTENTION FOR US NOW IS JUST SUCH AN IMPOSSIBLE-POSSIBILITY. THROUGH SERVICE (GOD'S AND OURS) WE ARE LIBERATED TO BE FULL HUMAN BEINGS.

First, we are liberated for ministry (diakonia). We are set free from hierarchical structures which place ministry in the hands of a few, to begin carrying out the work of the People.

Traditionally diakonia has taken three forms: curative, preventive, and prospective, (Hoekendijk, *Horizons of Hope*):

a. *Curative diakonia* is the healing and helping of victims in society.
b. *Preventive diakonia* is attempting to curtail the development of social ills which victimize human life.
c. *Prospective diakonia* is attempting to open the situation for a free realization and actualization of human life.

Although in the past, the church has specialized in

individual *curative* or "band-aid" tasks, recently people have become aware that it is necessary to work together on *preventive* health and social programs. It has also become slowly involved in *prospective* programs in which society is so changed that people can take part in shaping their own destiny and that the evils, such as war, poverty, racism and sexism, are attacked.

The kind of *diakonia* that we want in our own life is the latter. We do not want to be helped after we are crushed, but would much rather have justice that leads to elimination of destructive social structures.

In being liberated for ministry, we are drawn into the struggle for liberation of all peoples. Men and women, black and white, rich and poor seek to move together toward new ways of life in which those who have been *oppressed* are free to form their own agenda; to participate in shaping their own future and in deciding whom and how they will serve.

Second, we are liberated for others because we are called to be God's helpers or co-servants.

This is the image of woman in Genesis 2. She is created by God as *'ezer*—a divine helper for man who needs to live and work in community. Just like the image of the *'ebed* Yahweh (the Servant of God) in Isaiah 52, woman, and also man, is seen as a human being who has been given the privilege of living for others as God's representative.

This service in no way implies *subordination.* Nor does it imply *domination* of any human being over another. The alternative to subordination is not domination but service. There is no true ministry which is not freely given, in the same way that God's ministry is freely given. Social and church structures in which domination is used to make others serve are a denial of freedom. Just as subordination is a denial of true human dignity.

In this respect, the work of the Women's Liberation movement and Third World Liberation movements for new structures of justice, partnership and sharing sometimes may be disruptive in family, church and society. But they are not the real troublemakers. In fact, they are causing us to become aware of the real troublemakers—the structures of domination and

subordination which destroy the possibility of true humanity and service.

Third, we are liberated for God because we can experience the love and service of God in our own lives.

When confronted by the authorities, the Apostle Peter boldly proclaimed, "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). For the gospel claims our allegiance to the One who serves, beyond any human ideology; beyond any church or social structure.

Such a demand is not easy. It often makes us unreliable in a cause; unable to assert that, in fact, any particular program, or organization is of ultimate significance. Because Christians seek to live according to a new way of being human, they often find themselves as marginal or misfit people in the games of dominance and exploitation that people play. If we are not misfits, then we need to have another look at how and where we serve.

In the last few years many women have been discovering that they really are *misfits* and marginal to the male-dominated society in which they live. Some are seeking new ways to go on being misfits for the sake of society. They are working in community with others on the boundaries of institutions where they can try to create new structures for human life (Daly, *Beyond God the Father*). My own experience is that I have always been a misfit, and I am glad to find other women and men who feel as I do—those who are seeking, not just to be part of things as they are, but to serve the process of change toward God's intended future.

Not to be served, but to serve. These words —so impossibly-possible as a gift of God—are an instant communique of *who we are, and where we are going* as followers of Christ and representatives of an emerging new humanity in which "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female . . ." (Gal. 3:28).

Long ago as I glibly read those words circling that chapel chancel—*non ministrari, sed ministrare*— I didn't know how tough service would be! I didn't know just how much that promise of Jesus meant. I tried to share his baptism and temptations and I often ended up with wrong answers and worse defeats.

I still don't know how much that promise means. But I do know that in spite of all the devaluation and misuse and betrayal of the word *service* in churches and society, these words of Jesus continue to lead us toward a life of freedom. They are words about *a revolution in which everyone wins*—in which everyone finds a way of ministry and partnership on the road to human freedom! (Eric Mount, *The Feminine Factor*). Amen.

Time and the Main Line

by Jill Raitt

As Christian theologians, that is as interpreters of God's word, we have primarily to deal with Scripture. Secondly, we must face two other realities that present us with interpretations of Scripture: Church History and Ecclesiastical Authority. These three together shape the "main line," the tradition, that in turn shapes so much of our western culture.

There are some who would like to forget one or all of these three factors. There are voices that demand a resolute move into the future with no looking back. To look back is to share the fate of Lot's wife, i.e., never to move in any direction. So these voices argue. And what have Scripture, Church History and Ecclesiastical Authority to say to women?

Scripture has something to say to everyone. But Church History and Ecclesiastical Authority have little to say to women because they have nothing to say *from* them or *by* them. Even Scripture is a white male conditioning of Revelation and, as such, requires interpretation.

But is not Scripture the Word of God? Surely God's Word is not captive to the male sex and to its Semite origins and Greco-Roman development. Isn't it? How did God's Word translate itself into human terms if not as a male Semite in a Roman Empire dominated by Hellenism? In fact, how has God's Word been spoken and written with very few exceptions? Is there a single book of the Bible written by a woman? So the radical arguments go. And they conclude with an exhortation to be converted; to turn around and face the future. Let the dead bury the dead; the past bury the past. There is so much to be done to reach our goals of equality, freedom, and dignity for women and other groups ignored by the main line development.

But this attitude is unreal, is it not? How does one step out of one's skin, away from one's personal history and stand clear of the past? Are we not what we are because of what we have been? There is no running away from the

past and, I want to argue, there is no need to run away from it.

Let us look again at the way God speaks to us. God acts like a good teacher and speaks a language that the students can understand, introducing new and strange concepts by means of old and familiar ones. A good teacher does not begin with the last lesson, but builds toward it. Nor, I think, does God reveal more than the people are prepared to hear. For Christians, the Old Testament is a long preparation for the coming of Christ. And even then, how few could hear the Word of God now walking in time and history in a corner of the Mediterranean world and talking with a Galilean accent. Jesus walked as we walk, i.e., as one shaped by his past into his future, step by step, day by day. And the world in which he walked and to which he talked; the world who heard him and followed him, crucified and mourned him, this was a world dominated by men. Of course the New Testament speaks *about* women. But it does not speak *from* them. The disciples were not the only ones surprised that Jesus should speak as he did to the woman at the well. The woman is more surprised than they. And so, frankly, are we.

Revelation, then, God's Word, transcends time and times and yet subjects itself to a succession of moments as it does to a succession of sounds. God's Word speaks first through men, in their tongues, to men who hear with their ears. Men hear what they can and pass it on, slightly distorted, to their women. Women hear what men hear: men talking to men about men mostly. Women are spoken of and about. Women are not spoken to nor allowed, very often, to speak. Exceptions are quickly noted and eyebrows go up, even if it is Jesus himself who makes the exception.

And Revelation transcends times. It announces that there is in Christ neither male nor female. Men say this and write this and women hear it. Women also hear what men and women have better understood: keep your heads covered, obey, be silent. Women and children are somehow regarded as incomplete and therefore as non-persons. So it was. So it is for those who do not hear what is being revealed: "In Christ there is neither male nor female."

At last we are prepared to hear that Word; to let it be among us. Women and men today have new ears. This

day has been a long time preparing. What is this new thing that yet is very old? What is this marvel that enriches all, male and female? It is the slowly dawning realization that a woman is fully a person and in no way to be considered less adult, less intelligent, less able to live independently than a man.

What does this mean for us as theologians? It creates a wholly new ambient for us; it gives us new ears to hear the Word of God and it gives us new voices to interpret that Word. We can look at our past honestly and evaluate it without indulging either in rancor or in exaggeration. We can see how past cultures influenced the hearing of God's Word and we can celebrate our liberation from those cultural bonds that prevented women from taking their places in the world. But we can also understand that it was not possible for men *or women* to come earlier to the realization which we now enjoy and we can free ourselves of the cramping, whining accusations against the male world in general. It should not be forgotten that for the most part women shared the attitudes of the men toward women; indeed, many still do share a rather backward view of "women's place." We are freed, then, from bitterness against men in the past and patient with both men and women today who resist the idea that women can have careers other than motherhood just as men can have careers other than fatherhood.

What does this mean for us as theologians with regard to Ecclesiastical Authority? This is a question that touches raw nerves these days and it is difficult to be so cool and detached as when we speak of "the past." And indeed, "authority" is shaken to its very roots. Authorities must also hear God's Word anew or those same rulers of the churches will be no more able to follow Christ than were the rulers of the synagogue so long ago. The great principle of tradition, that we must do what the Fathers did and what the Church has always and everywhere done, this great principle is more shaken now than it ever was by the Reformation. In fact it was so little shaken by the Reformation that it still governs the protestant churches whose rule, when one is invoked, often is to look to some tradition, recent or distant, but to eschew innovation as a good man would shun a prostitute. The likeness of the present situation to the Reformation, however, is, I feel, more serious and far deeper. To become a truer

hearer of the Word is not to innovate even if it means scrapping venerable traditions. To overcome some of our deafness by discovering that we are attuned to God only as male *and female*, that it is as male *and female* that human beings image God, this is scarcely an innovation from the point of view of revelation. It is an innovation from the point of view engendered by ancient cultural-social attitudes.

There is not a single fundamental theological formulation that is not shaken to its roots by this simple statement: women are persons. This is where the theologian's task lies now, be that theologian male or female. What has been taught "always and everywhere" with regard to women is not a principle that can be invoked any longer because what has been taught has been interpreted by those whose ability to hear was culturally distorted and who in turn distorted the message. This statement in itself is sufficient to challenge the way in which theology is often done and to raise the cry of "relativism." One has only to study carefully the way in which God's Word worked among the Israelites to realize that God does work "in relation" to the cultural situation of the people. Isaiah cries that Jerusalem will not be destroyed. And Isaiah is right in his day. Jeremiah foretells the doom of Jerusalem and he is right in his day. And another threat to our desire to have absolute unchanging propositions with which to fence in the transcendent and mysterious reality that is God is the fact that we shall continue to distort the message in one way or another as long as God continues to entrust his Word to men and women who are bound by times and cultures and limited ways of hearing and understanding. Our comfort is not in having unchanging propositions about God, but in having a God who is unchangingly for us, loving us, and speaking to us in his Son and in and through our fragile human condition. One of the great events of our time is that there has been a major breakthrough in our understanding of what it is to be human in terms of male and female. This means new basic demands upon theology.

Allow me to indicate areas in which the admission that woman is as human, as much a person, as is man, opens up not only new problems but also new possibilities for understanding God's Word. (And I am taking "Word" in its widest application: the communication of God to us in the Incarnation, in Scripture, in our lives.) To make my point very specific,

I would like to talk about the impact on Roman Catholic Theology. You can then adapt my examples to your own denominations as seems appropriate.

Nothing is going to move Roman prelates from their ancient traditions regarding women unless something begins to erode those traditions from within. Frontal attacks upon the ordination of men only will strike the rock of Peter and fall away ineffectually. But issues which have to do not only with women as over against men, but rather with women as wives and mothers of men, strike within the citadel itself. The first doctrine that must be and is being looked at in a new light is that of marriage. Traditionally, children have been regarded as the primary and indeed the justifying reason for marriage. The physical consummation of the marriage then became the test of its validity. I will not rehearse here all the abuses to which this notion led and with which you are probably already too familiar. They can be summed up by saying that landed gentry and nobility cared for and protected their wives as they cared for and protected a prize brood-mare. Sons were more to be cherished and nurtured than the mother that bore them. Henry VIII provides an extreme and tragically ironic example of a determination to have a son to succeed him only to have a woman, Elizabeth, his greatest successor.

But if the whole notion of marriage is overturned and Eve is primarily Adam's companion and, with Adam, God's image, and therefore, with Adam, the multiplier of the race, then woman no longer looks up to man but turns to gaze *with* man at their common life; its goals and dreams. Together, children are considered, planned for, generated, welcomed. The act is specifically human, not generically animal, because knowing, desiring love begets children rather than the seasonal lust of a man legalized over the obedient body of a woman. The mother and the father have the child, care for it, teach it, all through its life. Child-raising is not just a woman's job. This challenges, of course, the Roman attitude about birth-control, but it challenges much else. It insists upon the fact that men and women must be, can be, *friends* as well as lovers in marriage. This is hardly an innovation. It seems to be what God had in mind when he created the sexes. Augustine recognized this as did, pre-eminently, the twelfth-century theologian and mystic, Hugh of St. Victor, who argued that there could be a valid

marriage without physical consummation. That is, Hugh argued that children were not the primary end of marriage nor was marriage primarily to tame the flames of lust. Hugh proposed marriage as primarily a desire to live together in the love of friendship!

But Hugh lost, and physical consummation won in the courts of Rome and of the land. For another 800 years, women would be considered primarily as child-bearers at best and temptresses at worst, but seldom as friends except in those rare instances that transcended men's rules, the friendship of the mystics, e.g., Francis and Clare, Teresa and John of the Cross. But do you see what it means to the male, celibate, clerical world if the friendship of women is given value? There must be equality for there to be friendship and there must be frequent association. Friends must mutually regard one another highly. One cannot be, in every way, condescending and the other always the inferior. It challenges also the notion that to be perfectly human is to be a man; to be a woman is to be a slightly defective human. And what a theologically revolutionary thing it is to claim that to be fully human is not to be either male or female, but male with female and vice-versa. The society which restricts itself to being wholly one or the other dehumanizes itself insofar as the segregation is done out of fear of the other sex, or worse, out of disdain for the other sex. God's image is badly marred in that situation, and men and women both suffer as a result.

Thoughtful theologians have begun to deal seriously with these understandings. But Rome is not yet moved at all by them. Rome has been shaken by their negative impact, however, by the resigning of priests and nuns and by the widespread disobedience on the part of both married couples and confessors regarding birth-control.

Meanwhile, serious theologians of all denominations have a heavy but exciting task to perform. They must read Scripture with new eyes, putting aside the cultural blinders that have distorted their interpretation for so long. They must recognize that Greek philosophy, Roman Law and Germanic-Frankish customs had far more to do with the canonical definition of marriage than had Scripture.

More difficult still for a clerically dominated Church, the whole notion of priesthood has to be redefined. And here,

the distortions go far beyond the Greeks and lie in a cultural mode of life that exalts the strong hunting male and herds the women into a safe enclosure where they can tend the children. And it must go even beyond this physical-cultural dominance of the male to the dawn of religious awareness and man's awe before the two-in-one mystery of life and death, of blood and breath, of womb and tomb. What is the first instinct of anyone before a mystery too great to be grasped? First to try to circle around it at a distance, trying to understand. When that fails, to venerate it, and lastly to build a fence around it; to control what cannot be understood and to hold back what is fearful. Around woman, the mysterious, the ambiguous, the life-giver, the one from whom blood and infants issue, fences must be built. She is taboo, too mysterious, too potent. Her mysteries, however, are kept within a body weaker than his own. So man can keep her under control. She, whose very nature is high priestess of life and death, must be kept far from the sacred mysteries that man has developed in order to deal, in an orderly and safe manner, with the rhythms of tribal life. A telling account is that of Rachel hiding her father's household god under her saddle and then preventing Laban from searching there by sitting on it and declaring that she is menstruous. Laban cannot approach her. It would be safer to lose the god he seeks—a tame little domestic god—than to brave the uncontrollable mystery that confronts him in his daughter's womanhood.

The Greek story is different, as the Greek genius is different, but the result is the same. Women must not be allowed to control the sacred mysteries lest the chaos of Dionysus overcome the hard-won order of Apollo. And in Rome, the vestal-virgins are circumscribed, venerated, left alone to tend the sacred flame and buried alive if they pollute their virginity and so endanger, in some mysterious way, the welfare of the state.

Driven underground in the patriarchal Semitic religions and in the civic religions of Greece and Rome, the feminine side of religious worship emerged again as demonic, as Hecate, and in secret societies that were immediately suspect. Is it any wonder that the Christian tradition picked up these attitudes and very early banned women from any priestly activity? How else could people of that culture react? And yet the Word of God transcended this situation. Nothing in the Gospels denies

women the priesthood. Indeed, the Word of God makes the mystery of woman a part of the Christian mystery, for Christ is born of woman. Christ calls us to awareness of these irrational attitudes and asks for worship in spirit and in truth. Have we at last ears to hear the call? By it our attitude toward God who creates life and death and sexuality is corrected. Fear is trained to respect and awe remains, but does not cringe. Instead we celebrate the mysteries of our bodies and our sexes and our whole selves as men and women and find in them sacraments for the better understanding of God and the better Christian life of ourselves and others.

Woman, then, brings deeper understanding of the reality of God. Is this not priestly? She mediates life. Is this not a priestly function? And she walks with dignity before God drawing others to do the same. Is it not possible that those deepest, most intense, and completely irrational objections to a woman as priest may be re-examined and trained by experience and cultural perception as well as by theology? I think we can be brought to an appreciation of the woman as a person who brings to the priestly task new and valuable dimensions that we must begin to explore. Further, we can begin to understand that to deny her the priesthood when she feels called to it is to deprive ourselves of one of the ways in which God speaks creatively through and into the fullness of humanity, male and female, drawing both together into the image of God.

We have much to consider as these possibilities open new horizons for us. It is my hope that this paper, like the classroom experience out of which it grew, may stimulate each of us to take steps in directions which we had not before considered. I know that this has been true in my own case. Teaching a class on "Women, Religion and Theology" and writing this paper have brought my own thinking much further. And so I offer it not as a finished exposition setting forth finalities, or even as the opinion of one expert in all of the fields upon which I have touched, but rather as a student of theology and of the human condition eager to help in the development of a much fuller, truer vision of God through the better appreciation of the image of God in man and woman. To this endeavor I invite not only women but men, for men have much to gain from the truth about themselves in relation to women. What a joyful task it is to work, as indeed we were created to do, together.

Why listen to the past?
Scripture?
Church History?
Why listen to
Ecclesiastical authority?

"The past has nothing to say
Nothing about where we are
Nothing about who we are
But we have a goal!
Forward! Don't look back."

Impossible.
My past grew into me.
My future springs from my now.
My today is tomorrow's yesterday.
Now is future.

Revelation.
Transcends Time and times.
Spoke then through men
In their tongues
To men who heard with men's ears.

Church History.
Men hearing what they can.
Women hearing what men hear
Men speaking to men
Women spoken of. Not to. Not speaking.
but
Neither male or female. . . . keep your heads covered.
obey, be silent
non-people
women and children
women are children
now
Neither male nor female . . . women hear with new ears
women speak to women
and to men
Interpreting past for now
Scripture for future.

Theology.
Woman as person.
God knows it!
Men and women discovering it.
Stories change.

Authority.
Shaken. Can hardly cope.
Woman shall adore God, not man.
Women "level" with men.
Eye to eye and no sniggers.

Now/Future/Now
Men and women honest.
No eyebrows raised.
AMA, ABA, AAUP, church, nation.
Colleagues.

God revealing in the world
Created
That we make.
Hearing together
Together the image of God.

Husband and Wife in Team Ministry

by Deborah and Geoffrey Hemenway*

Geoffrey: During the summer of 1972 we accidentally tripped over the concept of a team ministry. Although the Field Education assignment was officially mine only, we did most of the work together, except for preaching, and we loved doing all of it. We now and then discussed the possibility of Debbie's going to Divinity School also, but we finally dismissed this idea because we thought that this would result in our being split up. Debbie would have one parish, and I would have another. What we wanted was to work together as a team, so we dismissed the idea of Debbie's going to school because we thought that we would be able to work together as a team only if one of us was an ordained minister.

However, when I started school in the fall, I discovered that there were already wives and husbands in the school who planned to enter the parish ministry together. Almost immediately Debbie and I began to re-evaluate our former decision, and in October Debbie decided to enter the Divinity School after we had determined that this was economically possible.

From these rather nebulous beginnings, a strong concept of team ministry has developed because we both feel that we have been called to serve God in the team ministry. We are not here because we want to do great good for humanity. If we had wanted to do that, we would have become lawyers, teachers, or professors, occupations which we both have often considered. However, we both feel that we have been called to preach the Gospel and to serve. Without this call we strongly doubt that we would be here.

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* Deborah is a M.Div. junior and Geoffrey, a middler. They will be ordained deacons in the Western N.C. Conference of the United Methodist Church in June 1974.

Although we both believe that we have been called to serve God in the full-time ministry, this does not mean that we shall not have difficulties in responding to this call. Probably the biggest difficulty we shall face is the acceptance of the team ministry with both persons being accepted as ministers of the Word in all respects.

Debbie: Just as a person enters into any new situation with hopes and fears, I enter into the team ministry with certain expectations. The experience I have had on Field Education assignments gives a great deal of confidence that I will be accepted in the role of minister fairly quickly. This experience, albeit limited, has taught me that initially I will face some friction, some reluctance to accept me as co-equal with Geoff in terms of the ministerial role. However, this initial reluctance to accept me as co-equal has by and large subsided rather quickly, and is followed by the utterance, "She is a minister too!"

Our Field Education assignments have not as yet provided an opportunity for experience in all aspects of the ministry, so how people react to me in a counselling situation is still unknown. Also, we have not yet had experience in marriages and funerals since we are not yet Deacons. I am hopeful that eventually I will be asked to perform these rites. But as Nancy Allen, a member of a team in a parish, told me: "I don't push myself in these areas." Acceptance has been more difficult in regards to marriages and funerals than in the pulpit it seems.

The acceptance of me in the pulpit has been very important to me, since I view preaching as the focal point around which the rest of ministerial functions revolve. I expect to be accepted in this role as we move from church to church. In fact, so far there has been only one woman who has, at least to my face, found it difficult to accept me as a preacher of the Word. She asked me if I were a new Sunday School teacher and when I said that I was the "preacher" she laughed. But recently she said that I had preached a good sermon; therefore, I feel that she has begun to accept me as a minister. I have some confidence that acceptance of me as a preacher of the Word will lead to the acceptance of me in the totality of the ministry.

Besides acceptance, our greatest fears lie in the sphere of appointment. We are willing to serve one parish for one salary

initially and we expect that this will be acceptable to the the Bishop; particularly since we have already discussed this with one of the District Superintendents. However, there is still the fear of not having an opening for a team. Unlike Paul and Barnabas or other male teams, we cannot split up and one go to Rome while the other heads for Athens. Consequently we do not have the flexibility in terms of appointment and we recognize that this could present difficulties. We either have to be assigned as a team or to parishes close by, when we each want to hold a full-time position. There is the possibility of yoked parishes where we could serve parishes near to one another. There is always the nagging fear that there will not be two parishes nearby that will receive new appointments at the same time. However, we have high expectations that these potential difficulties can be resolved and that these fears will prove to be unfounded. Nevertheless, they are real.

Is the structure really flexible enough to allow for this varied form of ministry? We have great expectations that it is. However, there is the recognition that to some degree opportunities for appointment will be limited. We recognize that churches that need or could afford a full-time team are not numerous and that some churches do not need a team even if each team member works only part-time. Nevertheless we expect that the opportunities for team ministry within the structure exist either in terms of charges which can use two ministers or in terms of yoked parishes. The fear still exists, however, that the structure will prove to be too rigid to allow for the flexibility needed for a husband/wife team to work. Our goal of team ministry is dependent upon the willingness of the structure to be flexible in terms of appointment.

We look forward with eager anticipation to serving Christ's Holy Church as team ministers. While the hopes and fears expressed herein are very real, we feel confident that the difficulties will be overcome and the hopes realized. We believe that the team ministry is a viable form of ministry, and that through this means we will be most effective in serving.

A Discovered Heritage

by NANCY LEE ALLEN*

To be a woman in the ordained ministry today is in many ways to be a pioneer. Most of the time we would like to dwell on how the life of the pioneer is filled with excitement. At other times we must admit our loneliness. We are seen by others as peculiar; something new in the history of the Church. My personal feelings of peculiarity were greatly relieved last fall when I discovered the women of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Although none of these women were ordained ministers, many had dedicated their lives to Christ and sought to serve in full ministry. Thus they were confronted by many of the same obstacles that many women in ministry face today. It was somewhat surprising to me to discover that the struggle of women to give full-time service to the church was not a new struggle, but one in which we have recently had some very active sisters.

As with the reception of women into the ordained ministry today, the men in the Church were mixed in their reaction to the women of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society. Some received them with enthusiasm; others were forbidding. The Baltimore Conference in the last quarter of the nineteenth century took its stand for the formation of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church because

> this Society is helping to solve one of the most important problems of the age, viz, the suitable employment of the latent energy of Christian women.[1]

To the men, women certainly seemed to have much latent energy. They had come a long way from the early nineteenth century. As Mary Wheeler expressed it in 1880, the nineteenth

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1. Mary Isham, *Valorous Ventures* (Boston, Mass.: Methodist Episcopal Church Publication Office, 1936), p. 32.

century opened "with women in the cribbed, cabined, and confined sphere to which the natural prejudices of a man-monopolized world had assigned them."[2] Soon after the turn of the century there was a successful drive for the free admission of girls into institutions of learning. Women became involved in the anti-slavery movement, woman's sufferage drive, and missionary concern.

> The agitation against the vested wrong of slavery was also an emancipation proclamation for the womanhood of the North. With passionate intensity, untrained and unprepared, they threw themselves into the movement. By its sweep they were dragged out of their isolation, forced to think, to read, to find their voices, and loose their ever numbing consciousness of sex, to brave opposition and contempt in defense of something higher and holier than the proprieties.[3]

With the passing of the Civil War, women in America had experienced an immense change. Women had discovered that they were more than the old-fashioned heroine portrayed in novels and held up for admiration in society. Mary Isham, a missionary and Woman's Foreign Missionary Society historian, noted the effect of the Civil War:

> In those tragic years, women learned to conduct business and tend the farms and clothe and nurture the children when the heads of families volunteered or were drafted into armies. They learned to work together for the men in hospitals and on the firing line and to carry on when, under black headlines, dreadful lists of "killed in Battle" ended long suspense. Woman consciousness grew in these persons thrust out into independent life and action.[4]

After the war, women with their newly developed skills turned to interests which had been forced to lie dormant during the war. One of the areas into which women began to funnel their energies was the missionary movement. Since the early 1800's there had been several local and regional missionary societies formed to help missionary boards of various denominations. In spite of numerous Methodist Episcopal societies, many women, especially the wives of foreign mission-

2. Mary Sparkes Wheeler, *The First Decade* (New York: Phillips & Hunt, 1881), p. 8.

3. Helen Barrett Montgomery, *Western Women in Eastern Lands* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1910) p. 9.

4. Isham, p. 9.

aries, were beginning to feel the need for a society on the national level. Such a society would be formed for the distinctive purpose of working among women and children in foreign lands. Missionary wives had seen first hand how cultural barriers in foreign countries kept women from being exposed to the Christian message. Only they could reach these women and children, but because of their own domestic duties they could not fulfill this need. These frustrated women were the ones who first proposed that single women enter the foreign missionary field. However, in the 1860's there was no place for a single woman in the missionary system.

> The first Protestant missionaries were mostly married; . . . and, if they went out unmarried, the mission undertook the grave responsibility of selecting and sending out partners for them; but most of these women were missionaries' wives rather than missionary wives, a distinction which is of greatest importance.[5]

If single women were going to serve abroad then the National Board must change its policy or an independent organization must be formed. On March 23, 1869 the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church was formed "for the purpose of engaging and uniting the efforts of the women of the Church in sending out and supporting female missionaries, native Christian teachers and Bible women in Foreign lands . . . "[6]

Needless to say, the idea of an independent women's organization for mission purposes was not greeted with open arms by many men in the Church. The Missionary Board of the Methodist Episcopal Church, fearing that it would lose much of its support, argued that the ladies should focus their work "(1) To raise funds for a particular portion of our mission work in India, perhaps also in China; (2) Leave the administration of the work to the Board at home and the missions on the field."[7] In reply to this proposal

> Mrs. Dr. Twombly spoke the minds of the women then: "We women feel that we have organized an independent Society. We will be as dutiful children to the Church authorities, but through our own organization we may do a work which no other can accomplish."[8]

5. Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions* (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books Inc., 1966), p. 256.
6. Isham, p. 14.
7. Isham, p. 16.
8. Isham, p. 16.

The women were determined, and fortunately the men gave in to their wishes, although not without continued pressure for union. Mary Wheeler gives a vivid example of such coaxing by Bishop Janes at an early dinner meeting attended by leading women of the Society.

> He [Bishop Janes] commended the Society, and said that as the parent Society and this were working together so harmoniously, as the marital relation was the most sacred and delightful on earth, he proposed that the nuptials of the two be celebrated. Dr. Foster then said, that as the Bishop had 'gone courting,' and as no man, under such circumstances, liked to go away without an answer, he called for Mrs. Hibbard to reply, either accepting or rejecting. She replied that she had always been taught to be very honest in such matters, and she was too old to change her habits in this particular. She confessed that she saw two insuperable obstacles to the match: the first was, the two were *too near of kin*—the Bishop had just called one the *parent* Society; and, secondly, there was *too great a disparity in their ages,* the one being fifty years older than the other. She retired amid much applause, but the Bishop, undaunted, arose to say that a courageous man was not to be disheartened by one refusal.[9]

Not all men were against this new organization, but an editorial in the "Advocate" seemed to express the attitude of many:

> "Some of the most thoughtful minds are beginning to ask what is to become of the Woman movement in the Church," and then taking heart of grace continued, "Let them alone —all through our history like movements have started. Do not oppose them, and it will die out."[10]

But die out it did not! Membership mushroomed in local societies which were constantly being formed. Single women flocked to volunteer for overseas service. And those who stayed at home pinched pennies and sold handmade goods to support the Society's work abroad.

Here at last the women of America had a vehicle through which to obtain a higher expression of their Christian concern. It must be remembered that in 1867 it was improper for women to speak in public and ordination of women was unthinkable!

9. Wheeler, pp. 20-21.
10. Montgomery, p. 30.

Thus the WFMS gave women an opportunity to use the skills they had earlier obtained for the service of their Lord.

Needless to say, not all of these women made headlines, but many gave full lives of service in countries far from American shores where danger for their life was a constant reality. Perhaps by looking more closely at one of these women through a letter sent to her niece, we may gain a sense of the dedication and sincerity exhibited by these women.

As I first picked up this letter I was impressed by its writer's description of the area and work around Foochow, but was nevertheless disappointed by its seeming insignificance to her regular work. Only as I read her journal records, additonal letters, and historical accounts of missionary work in China did I discover the importance of Sarah Peter's vacation to Foochow. The hints of the future importance of this visit are reflected in the letter which follows:

> Foochow, China
> Aug. 11, 1892
>
> In the latter part of July, feeling deeply the need of a change of thought and surroundings I came away down to Foochow to visit Misses Trimble and Bonafi the former, a former school friend, the latter, a lady who came to China in company with me.[11]

"Feeling deeply the need of a change of thought and surroundings" Sarah had left her new work to go South for a two and a half month vacation. This was her first major vacation since arriving in China in 1889. At that time she went to the city of Chinkiang in Central China. She was assigned to do Woman's Evangelistic Work in the area, but for several months she would find little time for anything but the study of the language.

Sarah had been trained in science before leaving the U. S., so she made herself useful aiding Dr. Hoag in the preparation of medicine. Dr. Hoag was one of the first woman doctors sent to China by the WFMS. She spent her life working among the Chinese with a Chinese daughter she adopted. As Sarah's language skills improved Dr. Hoag reported that Sarah

11. Letter from Sarah Peters, Missionary of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, Foochow, China, August 11, 1892, to Anna Belle Peters (in collection of the author).

> regularly visited the dispensary, became acquainted and and conversed with the women so far as her knowledge of language would permit, and at the same time, supported by her presence the young Christian student could take up the thread of discourse and talk to the women more freely in her native tongue.[12]

Although her study of the language was arduous during her first two years, Sarah was quickly able to observe the strangeness of the land as compared to her home in Peoria, Illinois. She wrote a niece:

> I will send you a picture of Chinnio (a little boy of 6 yrs.) and Twen Giang (the little girl to whom he is betrothed of 5 yrs.) Their immense thickness is not all owing to fat, but to the thick wadded garments which they wear. The Chinese have very little fire if any at all and as the weather gets colder they put on more clothing, wadded garments, till the babies look like pillows. Chinnio is the only boy we have in the school and he is the son of Dr. Hoag's assistant. A great many little babes are put out to die or are put to death here in China.[13]

Sarah was just beginning to feel at home in Chinkiang. She had finally learned the language and in June and July of 1891 had devoted "most of the time to house visiting; spent one week itinerating on the circuit north of the river, visiting sixteen towns and villages with very good results."[14]

In August she was called to join the team in Nanking. She did not want to move. She wrote, "It was with regret that I left Chinkiang in August to help the ladies in Nanking for a season; and I hope soon to return to this work."[15] There was probably more to her hesitancy than the mere discomfort of leaving a now familiar setting. In May of 1891 there had been an anti-foreign outbreak in Wuku which arose "with the suddenness of a tropical storm."[16] Nanking missionaries were warned that they too were marked for de-

12. Lucy H. Hoag, "Medical Work," *Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the M.E. Church*, (1889), p. 86.

13. Letter from Sarah Peters, Missionary of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, Chinkiang, China, Written between 1889-1891, to Anna Belle Peters (in collection of the author).

14. Sarah Peters, "Woman's Work—Chinkiang and Nanking," *Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the M.E. Church* (1892), p. 88.

15. Sarah Peters, "Evangelistic Work Among Women," *Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the M.E. Church*, (1891), p. 82.

16. Isham, p. 189.

struction. Immediately all foreign women and children were evacuated, but before they "were outside the city gates their home and school were looted and fired."[17] Only six months after this close call the missionaries returned to Nanking. In their company was Sarah. Surely she must have been reluctant to enter this city which only a few short months earlier had threatened the life of her colleagues. But what did happen when they returned? We only get a hint in Mary Islam's book *Valorous Ventures* when she writes:

> The riots proved to be a "furtherance of the gospel." Hundreds of women came to the meetings. While immediate accessions to the church were few one old woman confessed, "There are many who believe on Jesus but are not yet ready to give up their idols."[18]

Sarah's evangelistic efforts must have seemed to be yielding fruits. After a year of hard work she was ready for a "change of location and thought."[19] Foochow seemed the perfect place for such a change:

> Here (in Foochow District) the work, the dialect and surroundings are quite different from that of Central China, the dialect so much so, for I can scarcely understand a word of it.
>
> You will ask why I came south in hot weather. There is a very fine sanitarium here, about three hours' ride from Foochow. It is on Kuliang mountain and is about two thousand five hundred feet above the sea level, and is very cool and pleasant. I am here with the above named friends and some other ladies of our board in a little cottage. While they are busy . . . I have some leisure in which to pay off long standing debts or correspondents. Since going to Nanking in December I have found the work very interesting, almost daily meeting with incidents that I am sure would interest my friends, but now that I am here so far away I find it difficult to get up any inspiration on that line and must write of present experiences.[20]

Although Sarah was on vacation she did not totally leave her work. As her letter to friends continued, she laments not yet having seen the Foochow work:

17. Isham, p. 189.
18. Isham, p. 189.
19. Letter from Sarah Peters, August 11, 1892.
20. Letter from Sarah Peters, August 11, 1892.

> I can see nothing of the work up here but Miss Trimble promises to take me out itinerating with her the first two weeks in Sept. if the weather is cool enough to permit us to travel safely by that time. She has charge of the day schools and evangelistic work in Hokchang District. She also has charge of the Woman's School in Foochow. The schools in Foochow do not open until the middle of Sept. I hope to remain long enough to see that work also. The work in this province is much older and hence much in advance of the work in Central China, and I hope to learn a great deal from it. I derive much good too from hearing the ladies talk over their various fields.[21]

Did Sarah know what her next major task was to be? Certainly when she had left for Nanking a year ago there had been no hint that she would start a school for girls in this city, famous for its ancient educational institutions for men. What influence did these visits to the Foochow schools make in Sarah's later work? Was it here at Foochow that the embryo of a Nanking Bible Training School began? Whether or not these speculations are true, Sarah did open the Nanking Bible Training School after returning from Foochow in 1893. "The students were soon carrying the gospel to their neighbors and to surrounding villages. In the beginning the Nanking Missionaries said, 'What can we do?' In 1899 they asked, 'What can be left undone?' "[22] Evidently Sarah found much more to do at Nanking, for it became her home until her retirement in 1926.

While on that vacation to Foochow, Sarah pondered about a wide variety of needs. One need was for indigenous Christian workers. In an earlier letter Sarah lamented the lack of native workers to help spread the gospel in Central China. In Foochow she seems to observe with envy the advanced nature of Christian work:

> There are a good many native Christians in this province and some of them are witnessing nobly for the Master.
>
> While we in Central China are looking out for opportunities to get a foot hold for work among women with scarcely any native helpers, here they have large districts with Christian day-schools for girls at various centers and here and there congregations of native Chris-

21. Letter from Sarah Peters, August 11, 1892.
22. Isham, p. 189.

tians all of which need instruction sadly, on the first principles of faith and Christian living.[23]

Sarah must have related her concern for the lack of native workers in Central China to her colleagues while in Foochow, for when she returned to Nanking she brought with her a woman who later became the "first foreign missionary, among the women, in Chinese Methodism."[24] Sarah related the circumstances of this recruitment in her 1891 report:

> We have thus far had no native assistant that could be termed a Bible woman, owing to the scarcity of women fitted for such work in this part of China, but while visiting at Foochow the ladies there kindly offered us one of their best, who returned home with us, and is now in school learning the dialect and pursuing Bible study. We trust she will be ready for work in one year.[25]

What an undertaking for a woman in China! Prior to the arrival of missionaries, few had dared to leave the shelter of their homes to enter the public sphere. Not only did the role of Bible woman require appearance in public, but Nanking was a great distance from Foochow and the language and customs of Central China were very different. It was as if this Chinese woman too had entered the missionary community as a foreigner in a strange land.

One new missionary was not enough for Sarah. Constantly she saw needs in China, and efforts to meet those needs were always foremost in her mind. This is obvious as she concludes her letter during her Foochow vacation:

> Every where numbers of heathen women are glad of an opportunity to come out and hear the Gospel but alas, there is only one of our ladies to each one of these districts and that lady tied down to a Woman's School or to a Girls Boarding-school, the school alone being sufficient to take all her time. It is sad that while there are so many consecrated Christian young ladies, more than can even get situations at home, this field is left so destitute. It is true that in each of these districts there are a number of valuable native helpers, the day school teachers, but these teachers are quite young and would be much more efficient under judicious supervision. If one lady

23. Letter from Sarah Peters, August 11, 1892.

24. Frances J. Baker, *The Story of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society 1869-1895* (New York: Hunt & Eaton, 1896), p. 299.

25. Sarah Peters, "Evangelistic Work Among Women," p. 82.

could give her whole time to evangelistic work in one district, just visiting the centers where there are day schools, she could spend just one week each quarter at each place. This would be possible if the number of the ladies of our board were doubled.

It is a great pity that such opportunities, the result of many years arduous toil should now run to waste for the want of what sisters in America might some of them give (themselves).

I have felt deeply the need of laborers at Chinkiang and at Nanking. In those fields it is very great for there it is dense darkness, but here a little light has found its way in and it makes the darkness even more dreadful because more apparent. It is hard to refuse light to those so far awakened as to crave it.

To me after the experiences I have had in Central China the opportunities for soul-saving here are magnificent. I would fain divide myself into two, one to return to Nanking and the other to remain here. My heart aches for these people.[26]

Sarah could not divide herself in two, so at the end of the two and one-half months she returned to her appointment at Nanking. However, the needs she had perceived while at Foochow certainly did not leave her mind. If this letter did not reach her sisters, certainly other notes with similar concerns were transfered to them. From the urgency expressed in the above letter one can scarcely be surprised to learn that a year and a half later her older sister, Mary, sailed for Foochow. Once mastering the Chinese language, Mary led the Woman's Evangelistic Work in one district, directed the the work of Bible women, day schools, a Romanized school, and a woman's training school. Ten years later, immediately following the death of their mother, their eldest sister, Alice, at 51 years of age, joined Sarah in Nanking to teach English and music.

Surely Sarah's trip to Foochow served to provide more than a much needed rest for a weary missionary woman. If the above speculations are correct this retreat to the South produced the establishment of a school in Nanking, the calling of the first Chinese woman missionary, and an invitation to two additional American women who devoted themselves to winning China for Christ.

26. Letter from Sarah Peters, August 11, 1892.

As a woman in ministry I have found this letter, and others similar to it, stimulating because of the courageous life it portrays. The women of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society took great risks as they sought to live lives of full service for Christ. Although I have a special warmness for Sarah Peters, who was my great, great, great aunt, I feel a sisterhood with all of the women of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society whose dedication to Christ pushed them to question and change the restrictions placed upon them by the Church. As I researched the history of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and read letters and journal reports by my aunts, I discovered I was researching my own history and the history of women in ministry. No longer do women need to feel like a new peculiarity as they enter what has been the man's world of the church. Instead we are but one link in a long heritage of women dedicated to Christ working in the Church.

Women and Missions: A Bibliography

by ARTHUR L. ALLEN

A study of 19th- and 20th-century American Protestant missions cannot honestly overlook the powerful role played by women at home and abroad. The following outline of works is far from being an exhaustive listing of materials available for study. It is, rather, a hopefully simple guide to help one get started on a search through a somewhat neglected field.

One will quickly note that the vast majority of these works are about and by Methodists. There are similar resources involving other denominations, but I am not as familiar with them. (All these books are found in the Duke Divinity School Library.)

I. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Liu, Kwang-Ching. *Americans and Chinese: A Historical Essay and a Bibliography.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963; 211 pp.
Note especially works by and about women on pages 112-132.

II. HISTORIES

Baker, Frances J. *The Story of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1869-1895.* N. Y.: Hunt & Eaton, 1896; 436 pp.
Gives a history of society development at home and a country-by-country survey. No Index. Tables in back list those sent out and the statistical state of missions in 1894.

Isham, Mary. *Valorous Ventures.* Boston: Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1936; 446 pp.
A history of the first 66 years. First 105 pp. is a general history of the societies and their work. The rest of the book is a country-by-country history. Well written, organized and illustrated. At the end is a missionary roll listing dates & places of each person who served up until 1935.

Montgomery, Helen Barrett. *Western Women in Eastern Lands.* N. Y.: The Macmillan Company, 1910; 286 pp.
A study book commissioned by the Central Committee on the United Study of Missions. Recalls the background of the women's mission work in the Abolition, Temperance & Suffrage Movements. Reveals treatment of women in other cultures. Looks at work of women missionaries and the effects of that work on foreign women.

Wheeler, Mary Sparkes. *First Decade of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church with Sketches of its Missionaries.* N. Y.: Phillips & Hunt, 1884; 346 pp.
An account of each Annual Meeting and brief sketches on every missionary sent out in those first 10 years.

III. MISSIONS AND THE ROLE OF WOMEN

Hollister, Mary Brewster. *Lady Fourth Daughter of China.* Cambridge, Mass.: The Central Committee on the United Study of Foreign Missions, 1932.
Written for women in the U. S. by a woman missionary about women in China. Intended for use in study groups.

Woodsmall, Ruth Frances. *Eastern Women: Today And Tomorrow.* Boston: Central Committee on the United Study of Foreign Missions, 1933; 221 pp.
An extensive Table of Contents and Index. Part I—"The Present Position of Eastern Women." Part II—"The Relationship of Christian Missions to the Development of Women in the New Day."

IV. INDIVIDUAL WOMEN MISSIONARIES

Holman, Nellie. *My Most Unforgettable Patients.* N. Y., 1953.
A woman doctor in China during the 1920's writes of some of her experiences.

John, I. G., compiler. *Missionary Cameos.* Nashville: Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1899; 92 pp.
Sketches of 85 women missionaries.

Lane, Ortha May. *Under Marching Orders in China.* Tyler, Texas: Story-Wright, Inc., 1971; 276 pp.
The personal story of a Methodist missionary to China from 1919 until the Communist takeover. Good Index.

Marshall, Elsie. *"For His Sake": Extracts from the Letters of Elsie Marshall.* London: Religious Tract Society, 1896.
A missionary to China from the Church of England Zenana Society, Elsie Marshall, was martyred on August 1, 1895 during a Vegetarian Riot. The letters tell of her work.

The Hymn to Wisdom: Exegesis of Job 28:20-28

by Carol Woodson Bernard*

Prolegomenon

I have chosen to exegete verses 20-28 of the Hymn to Wisdom, Chapter 28 of the Book of Job.

Sellin and Fohrer in their survey of Job explain that, because of the difficulty of the Book of Job, "literary analysis is in large measure determined by a prior interpretation of the book."[1] Similarly, my choice of a passage from Job was determined by my prior interpretation of the book. Before my work this semester, I had thought that I understood the Book of Job. And I elected to study Job in a preceptorial, because Job seemed to ask questions that I wanted to ask; Job challenged God, and I wanted to challenge what others called God. I felt that "more than Prometheus or Oedipus, Job is the universal symbol for the western imagination of the mystery of undeserved suffering."[2] Moreover, in the Hymn to Wisdom, I heard the poet's answer to the problem of suffering: man cannot know or understand. God alone possesses wisdom. Man therefore cannot know God.

From my work this semester, I recognize that I was reading into the Book of Job what I was feeling. So I have tried to listen to the text without the necessity to hear my own values and beliefs. And I have tried to grasp the meaning and purpose of the whole of the Book of Job, rather than to isolate passages of meaning to me.

I have worked through to one purpose of the Joban poet: to show the inefficacy of the traditional answers to the problem caused by the contradiction of faith and experience—the problem

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* Ms. Bernard is a middler in the M.Div program. This is a shortened version of her O T 11 exegesis paper, fall 1972.

1. Ernst Sellin and Georg Fohrer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (New York, Abingdon Press, 1965), trans. David Green, p. 326.

2. Richard B. Sewall, *The Vision of Tragedy* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1959), p. 9.

of the suffering of the innocent. Perhaps the most important answer was the theory of retributive justice.

> Israel was convinced that there was a definite and even clearly recognizable connection between what a man does and what happens to him, such that the evil deed recoils banefully upon the agent, the good one beneficially. . . . But this retribution is not a new action which comes upon the person concerned from somewhere else; it is rather a last ripple of the act itself which attaches to its agent almost as something material.[3]

Scott has catalogued other solutions to the problem of undeserved suffering. Suffering may be disciplinary, probationary, temporary or only apparent, inevitable because sin is universal, necessarily mysterious, haphazard and morally meaningless, or vicarious.[4] Some of these solutions are offered by the three friends who attempt to solve the problem "by striking note after note in differing lines of thought and so move in a much wider stream towards the solution."[5] The three friends, however, did not find a solution to the problem; Job did. It is the purpose of this paper to show that chapter 28 acts as a catalyst in Job's discovery of the solution to the problem.

With the three friends, Job tried to discover the meaning of his suffering. Tsevat points out that, at the same time that Job could see that the theory of retribution did not explain human experience, Job was still holding on to it when he demanded justice from God. "In the absence of the principle of retribution, for Job to expect a lot corresponding morally with his deed is absurd."[6] Chapter 28 is another attempt by Job to explain away his suffering. The message of chapter 28 is that man cannot understand, for God alone possesses wisdom. Suffering is necessarily a mystery to man. That this is a traditional solution may be surmised from the similar message of Proverbs 21:30 "No wisdom, no understanding, no counsel, can avail against the Lord." Job could not accept this explanation of his suffering, for, although it was also a praise of God, the Hymn to Wisdom made an even greater chasm

3. Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (New York, Harper & Row , 1962), trans. D. M. G. Stalker, Volume 1, pp. 384-5.

4. R.B.Y. Scott, *The Way of Wisdom in the Old Testament* (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1971), pp. 140-150.

5. von Rad, p. 410.

6. Matitiahu Tsevat, "The Meaning of the Book of Job," *Hebrew Union College Annual*, XXXVII (1966), p. 98.

between man and God. So Job continued to clamor for the meaning of his suffering by the oath of clearance (chapter 31).

Rubenstein has presented one explanation of Job's refusal to be satisfied with the knowledge that man cannot know God.[7]

> Since there is nothing to indicate that biblical man was less intelligent or insightful than men in our generation, we have no reason to believe that biblical man was incapable of drawing conclusions similar to those which Elisha ben Abuya drew (there is no judgment and there is no Judge). It is my opinion that the author(s) repressed their insights because they were fearful of the price to be paid for living in a spiritual and metaphysical wasteland.

Rubenstein, however, has misperceived the theme of Job to be God's accountability to Job, if Job's sufferings are unmerited. The purpose of the Joban poet was to demonstrate two things: (1) that "the cause of misfortune is not necessarily sin"[9] and (2) that suffering does not necessarily mean separation from God. "The fellowship of God is enriching, and that fellowship may be found in adversity no less than in prosperity."[10]

The reason that Job cannot accept the knowledge that man cannot know God is that Job has known God (chapter 29). The solution to the problem of his undeserved suffering is his relationship with the God who alone possesses wisdom. "God's answer is His theophany, the mere fact that He appeared to the man who deemed himself cast out from the presence of God."[11] The poet of Job has developed the theme that, although it is true that man cannot find the place of wisdom and understanding, for God alone knows its place (chapter 28), it is not true that man cannot know God. God has made himself known to man, so man can be in relationship with God (38:1-42:6).

7. The Hymn to Wisdom "might at least inspire a humble and reverent kind of agnosticism in the rebellious, proudly certain, and innocence-protesting hero." Samuel Terrien, "Introduction to and Exegesis of the Book of Job," in *The Interpreter's Bible* (New York, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1954), III, p. 1100.

8. Richard L. Rubenstein, "Job and Auschwitz," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, 25 (Summer, 1970), p. 427.

9. E. Dhorme, *A Commentary on the Book of Job* (London, Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd., 1967), trans. Harold Knight, p. lxxxi.

10. H. H. Rowley, "The Book of Job and Its Meaning," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 41, no. 1 (September, 1958), p. 203.

11. Tsevat, p. 81.

The thesis of my paper is that (1) the Hymn to Wisdom was written by the poet of the Dialogue; (2) it was composed as an independent unit, either before or after the poet had written the Dialogue; (3) it was inserted by the poet himself or by a disciple; (4) verse 28 is a later interpolation by another person; and (5) the position of chapter 28 in the third cycle of speeches may be challenged, but whether it is transferred to another position or retained in its present place, the message of the Hymn to Wisdom is important to the understanding of the whole of the Book of Job.

Literary criticism

> There has been much discussion about the literary composition of this book, not only or even primarily from interest in questions of literary criticism in themselves, but for the purpose of understanding the book and its real purpose.[12]

It is important to place verses 20-28 in the context of the whole of chapter 28 and then to place chapter 28, the Hymn to Wisdom, in the context of the third cycle of speeches. And it is necessary to consider the relation of chapter 28:20-28 to the whole of the Book of Job and to consider the problem of the integrity of Job.

The subject of the wisdom song is not ordinary, day-to-day wisdom; the subject is Divine Wisdom. In chapter 28, "Wisdom" is "given the definite article, for it signifies the totality of the intelligence presupposed by the world process."[13]

Before verse 20, the poet has described in detail the efforts of mankind to discover Wisdom and understanding.

> Man knows where to find silver, gold, iron, copper (28:1-2); he searches the rocks and the earth, he digs mines, he finds precious stones far from any living creature; nothing escapes him (28:3-11). "But whence comes Wisdom? And where is the place of understanding?" (28:12). Vainly is it sought for on the earth and in the deep (28:13-14). In the market where are displayed gold, silver, precious stones, coral, crystal, topaz, and every kind of treasure, it is not found, and cannot be bought (28:15-19).[14]

12. Otto Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament, An Introduction* (New York, Harper and Row, 1965), trans. Peter R. Ackroyd, p. 456.

13. E. G. Kraeling, *The Book of the Ways of God* (London, S.P.C.K., 1938), p. 107.

14. Dhorme, p. li.

Verse 20, a refrain, repeats the questions of verse 12. Verses 21-22 explain that no creature who lives on the earth or who flies in the sky can find the place of Wisdom and understanding; even the forces of destruction and death do not know the place, although they have heard a rumor of it. Verses 23-27 are a praise to God who alone has found the place of Wisdom and understanding and who knew Wisdom when he created the universe.[15]

That chapter 28 is a single unit, therefore, is not in question. That chapter 28 is independent from the third cycle of speeches and from the rest of the Book of Job as well is in question.

In relation to the third cycle of speeches, most commentators do not see the place of the Hymn to Wisdom.

Tournay is the only commentator I have found who retains chapter 28 in its present position *because of* its contribution to the third cycle. By two transpositions, he shows that chapter 28 can belong in the discourses of the third cycle. Tournay places 24:18-25 after 27:13-23 to make a single unit of Job's mock of the speech of Zophar. And he assigns 26:5-14 to Bildad instead of to Job in order to complete Bildad's third speech (25:2-6).

> L'un des avantages, et non des moindres, de cette solution, est de replacer le chapitre XXVIII dans sa vrai perspective; non seulement est ainsi justifiée la présence du kî initial, comme lien logique avec ce qui précède, mais la question d'authenticité est par là même résolue; l'éloge de la Sagesse divine, mystérieuse et inaccessible, met fin au premier acte, aux discussions qui précèdent.[16]

Tournay also explains that "le texte n'en est d'ailleurs pas aussi corrompu qu'on le dit habituellement."[17]

It is important to listen to the third cycle of speeches without the preconception that it is incomplete or too damaged. It is important to listen to what is said without dismissing the meaning because the form does not conform with what

15. I have not included verse 28 here, because its authenticity is debated. Verse 28, unlike the rest of the song, talks of a wisdom that is attainable by man, i.e., piety and religion. Verse 28 will be discussed below.

16. R. Tournay, "L'Ordre Primitif des Chapitres XXIV-XXVIII," *Revue Biblique*, 64, no. 3 (1957), p. 322.

17. *Ibid.*

is expected.[18] I will present a summary of the arguments set forth in the third cycle in order to show that the Hymn to Wisdom can be a part of the third cycle of speeches, even without any changes in the order of the speeches.

Eliphaz speaks first about man's relationship to God: "Can man be any benefit to God? Can even a wise man benefit him?"(22:2).[19] In 22:12-14 he describes God at the zenith of the heavens, God who is omniscient. Then in 22:21-30 Eliphaz appeals to Job to repent. If Job will regard precious metal as dust and the gold of Ophir as stones from a river bed, then God himself will be Job's silver in double measure (22:24-25). Eliphaz emphasizes the incomparability of God.

Job answers Eliphaz's emphasis by pointing to the gulf between man and God. "If I go forward, he is not there; if backward, I cannot find him; when I turn left, I do not descry him; I face right, but I see him not" (23:8-9). God is inaccessible to man. In 24:1-17 Job describes God's indifference to injustice. And in 24:18-25 Job mocks the arguments of his friends who say that death brings justice, for Job knows that death comes to the wicked and to the just alike (21:23-26).

Next is Bildad who threatens Job with God's omnipotence. "(God's) squadrons are without number; at whom will they not spring from ambush?" (25:3). Bildad asserts that mankind cannot be justified before God.

Job knows about God what Bildad has said; Job too can talk of the might of Yahweh destroying the sea-monster Rahab (26:5-14). Then Job tells the three friends that he will teach them what is in God's power and what is God's purpose (27:11). "Dans XXVII, 11, il annonce qu'il va faire connaître à ses amis la main de Dieu (ce sera l'hymne à la Sagesse, XXVIII)."[20] But, before he does, he asks them why they say such empty nonsense about God (27:12). So 27:13-23 may be Job's description of the nonsense that the friends have been passing as wisdom; perhaps it is an interruption and a mock of what Zophar would have said.

S'ils connaissaient (la façon d'agir de Dieu), ils ne per-

18. Tournay's insight and the rule—if a passage does not make sense to me in its present position, then it probably does belong there—have influenced my thought.

19. The translation for this section is the NEB.

20. Tournay, p. 322.

> daient pas leur temps à des paroles vaines, comme celles qui vont suivre. Job, en effet, reprend ici la dernière phrase du discours de Sophar (XX, 29) sur la rétribution des impies, et à la manière de ses amis, dans un persiflage ironique, il débite lui-même la réplique qu'on attendait de la part de Sophar.[21]

Then, with chapter 28, Job returns to his point: to teach the friends about God's power. Job knows what Eliphaz has said; Job too refers to the gold of Ophir that is worthless (28:16). And Job knows what Bildad and Zophar have said. But Job knows more than the three friends; Job knows that Wisdom is the possession of God alone.

I have tried to show that in the third cycle of speeches there is a development of the attributes of God. Chapter 28 is the highest point in that development. Wisdom is the attribute of God alone.

Now it is necessary to consider the relation of the Hymn to Wisdom to the whole of the Book of Job. It is important, therefore, to establish that chapter 28 is not the only reference to Wisdom.

Chapter 28 does have a place in the Book of Job. The theme of the poem to Wisdom is present in other parts of the book, especially in the speeches of Yahweh. Moreover, the theme of chapter 28 contributes to the development of the main theme of the poetic Dialogue.

Form criticism

> There is no single classification appropriate to the literary form of the Book of Job. . . . The book viewed as a unit is *sui generis* and no single term or combination of terms is adequate to describe it. The reason for this situation is apparent when one considers the question of the unity and integrity of the book.[22]

The form of chapter 28, however, can be determined, because it is an integral unit within the whole book. Chapter 28 has been described as a hymn, a song, a wisdom poem, and a *mashal.* Wisdom or didactic poetry is distinctive, because a wisdom poem was composed as a single unit; it did not "originate through juxtaposition of individual sayings

21. *Ibid.*, p. 327.
22. Marvin H. Pope, *Job* in *The Anchor Bible* (Garden City, New York, Doubleday &. Company, Inc., 1965), p. xxx.

or groups of sayings."[23] And *mashal* is "the characteristic word for parallelistic poetry."[24]

What is the meaning that is conveyed by the form of chapter 28? Dhorme explains that "such a difference of style (between prose and poetry) is controlled by the subject matter itself and is deliberately intended by the author."[25] The subject of the poem is the Divine Wisdom that man cannot find, for only God knows the place of Wisdom. Such a "fine metaphysical flight"[26] requires poetry. Also the purpose of chapter 28 has been described as a "choral interlude [that] bears the reader aloft and subtly prepares him for the higher level of the theophany"[27] or as a pause to bring the debate between the friends to a close.[28] For these purposes, perhaps poetry is more appropriate than prose.

Redaction criticism

> Now it is certainly true that a poem about wisdom is not quite what is expected in this context, but exactly for that reason it is much more difficult to understand why somebody should have inserted it there.[29]

There are three possible ways to explain the present position of chapter 28 in the third cycle of speeches.

(1) The Joban poet composed the Hymn to Wisdom, either before or after he had composed the poetic Dialogue. If the wisdom song was written before the Dialogue, then the poet may have inserted it in the third cycle of speeches in order to add a level of meaning or to bring the debate to a close. If the wisdom song was written after the Dialogue, the poet may have inserted it in its present place to add some meaning. Or the Joban poet may have inserted the Hymn to Wisdom at another place in the Dialogue.

(2) A disciple of the poet of Job may have added the poem to the Dialogue in order to preserve the beautiful song. He would have added it to the third cycle of speeches, rather than

23. Sellin-Fohrer, p. 313.
24. T. K. Cheyne, *Job and Solomon or theWisdom of the Old Testament* (London, Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., 1887), p. 38.
25. Dhorme, p. lxiv.
26. *Ibid.*, p. li.
27. Terrien, p. 1105.
28. Tournay, p. 331.
29. H. Ringgren, *Word and Wisdom: Studies in the Hypostatization of Divine Qualities and Functions in the Ancient Near East* (Lund, H. Ohlssons Boktryckeri, 1947), p. 92.

to another section, because he saw a connection of meaning.

(3) If the Hymn to Wisdom was not written by the poet of the Dialogue, someone else may have added it to the poetic Dialogue to retard or disrupt the third cycle, or someone may have added it to alter the meaning of the third cycle and so to make it more acceptable. If the wisdom poem was written by the poet of Job, someone may have moved it from its original position to the third cycle in order to confuse the arguments.

It is my position that the Hymn to Wisdom was composed by the Joban poet who placed it in its present position and that the wisdom song makes an important contribution to the theology of the Book of Job, for it is an extra source that points to the poet's meaning and purpose.

> But, whether an extract from a larger work or written as a supplement to the poem of Job, the passage in its present position is evidently intended to have a reference to Job's problem.[30]

Whether or not one accepts that the Hymn to Wisdom belongs in its present position, it is there. The task, therefore, is to describe the "theological cement" that holds chapter 28 in its present place. Some critics explain that chapter 28 is only a later interpolation; the song has meaning in itself, but it has no meaning in the third cycle. Others view the Hymn to Wisdom as a pause or interlude; it is necessary to the form of the Dialogue, but it is not necessary to the theology of the Dialogue. A few commentators hold that the meaning of chapter 28 is necessary to the meaning of the Book of Job.

The Hymn to Wisdom is a traditional answer to questions that men cannot explain away. The poem offers the answer that man cannot understand. Mankind cannot know God. The song has been described as agnostic. Scott explains that agnosticism was an alternative, at least for a few in ancient Israel, like

> Agur, who was not an Israelite, but whose positively agnostic view is quoted in an appendix to the Book of Proverbs (30:1-4) . . . and Qoheleth whose God was not the Yahweh who had revealed himself for Israel's salvation but a remote and mysterious Being whose ways man could not know.[31]

30. Cheyne, p. 41.
31. Scott, p. 140.

I propose that it was the poet's plan that Job consider this solution to the problem of unmerited suffering. And it was the poet's plan that Job refuse to accept this solution. Before the theophany, Job knew that man cannot find the place of Wisdom, for God alone possesses Wisdom. By means of the theophany, Job learned that God enters into relationship with mankind and God gives wisdom to mankind as a gift. The purpose of the poet was to show that man cannot contain God by the formula, "God is just,"and man cannot contain God by the formula, "man cannot know God."

Historical criticism

> In the case of wisdom literature, the correspondence between form and life setting is somehow less significant. Even the content (which cannot be separated from the question of form) reveals very little about the speaker and life setting.[32]

First are the questions of the author of chapter 28 and the date of composition.

It is my position that the author of the Dialogue is also the author of the Hymn to Wisdom and that he wrote in the exilic or postexilic period. So there are two more questions: (1) Was the Joban poet a Jew or a non-Jew? and (2) What is the relation of the story of Job to the history of the destruction and exile of Israel?

> The notion that Job . . . represents the nation of Israel in a sort of historical allegory is intriguing. Certainly, if the work was composed in the exilic or early post-exilic period, as many critics believe, it would be difficult if not impossible for the author to ignore the parallel between the sufferings of the individual and the nation.[33]

Pope explains that, if the poet of Job was a Jew, living in the exilic or post-exilic period, he would have given some evidence that his purpose was to present "a parable of his nation's fate and destiny."[34] Also he would have not chosen a descendant of Esau to portray the righteous sufferer, for the Edomites were enemies of Israel and Judah. If the Joban poet, however, was a non-Jew, the absence of nationalism would be natural, and the choice of an Edomite would be harmless.

32. Roland E. Murphy, "Form Criticism and Wisdom Literature," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 31 (October, 1969), p. 482.
33. Pope, p. xxix.
34. *Ibid.*, p. xxxiii.

It is more probable that a Jew could be unconcerned about the fall of the political nation than that a non-Jew could be so concerned about the praise of Yahweh.

> Where shall we look for that stern and uncompromising quest of human righteousness that is manifested in a figure like Job, except in the religious life of Israel?[35]

Pope resolves the problem of whether or not the poet was a Jew in another way. He pushes back the date of composition from the exilic or post-exilic period to the seventh century, when a Jew would have been able to write without reference to the nation.

Tur-Sinai suggests that the poet was a Jew, who lived in Exile in Babylon. The poet wrote the Dialogue, in Aramaic, as instruction for his captors. His choice of a non-Israelite, therefore, was purposeful. And his lack of concern for the fate of the nation is explained, for his purpose was to show the superiority of the worship of Yahweh.[36]

Dhorme hypothesizes that the Joban poet was a learned Jew living in the post-exilic period. Because of the political conditions, he was able to travel to Egypt and the Nile, to the mines of Sinai, and to the shores of the Red Sea.

> One might imagine that he wrote the second part of his work, the speeches of Yahweh and the poem on Wisdom (28), on his return from one of these journeys and with his mind filled with memory of the marvels he had seen.[37]

The Joban poet was not concerned with the fall of the political nation. In the tradition of wisdom writers, he was concerned with the situation of the individual, living at any time and in any land.

It is generally held that the poet of Job did not have the nation of Israel in mind. It seems probable, however, that the Book of Job was read for the first time with Israel in mind. This would help to explain the book's inclusion in the canon and the interpolation of the Epilogue.

There are four theories concerning the authenticity of the Prologue and Epilogue. (1) Both the Prologue and Epilogue are older than the poetic Dialogue. They were once part of a *Volksbuch,* and older, well-known tradition of a patient Job. The poet took the Prologue and Epilogue from the *Volks-*

35. Kraeling, p. 15.
36. Tur-Sinai, p. xxxvii.
37. Dhorme, p. clxxi.

buch as the frame for his Dialogue.[38] (2) The poet of Job composed the Prologue and Epilogue as the setting for the Dialogue. "One and the same narrator is responsible for the whole book."[39] (3) Both the Prologue and Epilogue were added later by another person.[40] (4) The Prologue is authentic, but the Epilogue is a later interpolation. Cheyne was the first person to separate the question of the authenticity of the Prologue from the question of the authenticity of the Epilogue.[41] Today most critics agree that the Dialogue requires the Prologue to introduce the problem. That the Epilogue is required is debated.[42] Cheyne put forward the theory that the Prologue was taken from an existing source by the Joban poet as his starting point and that the Epilogue is a later interpolation by another person. Cheyne proposed that the Epilogue was added to the Prologue-Dialogue after the return of Israel from the Exile. "The solution probably is that Job in the Epilogue is a type of suffering, believing, and glorified Israel."[43] And Cheyne showed the parallel with Isaiah 61:7.

> And so, because shame in double measure and jeers and insults have been my people's lot,
> they shall receive in their own land a double measure of wealth,
> and everlasting joy shall be theirs.

There is one more question: Is the Book of Job history?

38. *Ibid.*, p. lxxiv.

39. *Ibid.*, pp. xxxi-xxxii.

40. Perhaps the Dialogue could stand alone. Some introduction, however, would be necessary. Chapter 31, the oath of clearance, could provide the ending. Pope explains that the oath of clearance was "tantamount to acquittal, since it was assumed that the terror of the sanctions of the self-imprecations would deter anyone from swearing falsely" (lxxii). If nothing happened to Job after the oath, the friends would have to accept that Job was innocent. The theophany would be Job's answer. Perhaps a happy ending was not necessary.

41. Dhorme, p. lxxiii.

42. Here is the insight of Tsevat, a footnote on page 97, concerning the argument that the poet would not have added the Epilogue because it is an anticlimax. "One, it cannot be assumed that the ancient Israelite would have been disturbed by this anticlimax in the same manner as the contemporary Westerner reared on the canons of Greek literary style and theory. The Israelite may indeed have welcomed it with relief. Secondly, the epilogue provides the needed resolution of the plot. . . . The problem of the book, which is spiritual, is solved, and Job is vindicated before the epilogue. But he remains in his physical pain and social disgrace. His pain was a necessary device in the drama of ideas. This drama is now over and that pain should be removed. The epilogue does just this."

43. Cheyne, p. 58.

For a long time, the book was read as literal history. Job was thought to be a patriarch who lived at the time of Abraham. In the Middle Ages, the Book of Job was thought to be a parable. Recently, Guillaume has proposed that the story of Job is history.[44] He explains that Job's ancestors probably took flight from the Northern Kingdom in 722 B.C. They settled in the Hijaz, where over time a wealthy Jewish community grew. In 552, however, Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon, forced to live in exile, invaded the Hijaz. The Babylonians took control of the oases of the Hijaz and forced the Jewish inhabitants to flee into the desert. Job was one of the wealthy Jews who lost his family and property in the invasion. Guillaume explains that the Epilogue is the historical account of the end of the Babylonian occupation of the Hijaz in 542. Most critics, however, do not look for history in the wisdom literature.

> Today the view is general that Job is the name of an ancient worthy and that there was a historical person behind the book, but that the book as we have it is the artistic creation of the author, who used the ancient figure of Job as the vehicle for his message.[45]

Textual and linguistic criticism

Concerning chapter 28 alone, "the differences between the MT and the LXX of the material from Job 28 are slight."[46] Similarly, in my comparison of English translations of Job 28:20-28, there are only small differences in the King James Version, Revised Standard Version, New English Bible, and New American Standard Bible.[47]

The principal argument for the authenticity of verse 28 is that it counters the agnosticism of verses 1-27. It is my position that the speeches of Yahweh represent the Joban poet's answer to the agnosticism of the wisdom song. So, verse 28 is a later interpolation.

44. A. Guillaume, *Studies in the Book of Job,* Supplement II to the Annual of Leeds University Oriental Society (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1968), pp.7-14.

45. Rowley, pp. 172-3.

46. Battistone, p. 137.

47. There was one exception, the New American Bible. The whole of chapter 28 was rearranged: 1-2, 5-6, 12-13, 15-18, 20-21, 7-8, 14, 22-24, 3, 9-11, 25-28. Verses 4 and 19 were omitted. I could not find the basis of the rearrangement.

Theological and hermeneutical analysis

To begin, there are four important differences between my position and that of an ancient Israelite that could affect the interpretation of chapter 28. (1) I have the alternatives of agnosticism and atheism to resolve the problem of the relation of suffering to divine justice. Job does have the alternative of agnosticism, but he rejects this solution when he does not stop with the Hymn to Wisdom. Job does not have the alternative of atheism; Job "is prepared to see God as a madman, but he is not prepared to deny him."[48]

> Job accuses God. He never faces the possibility that the God he accuses does not exist, that earth is merely the dumb witness to the succession of amoral passion, power, and violence we call the human adventure.[49]

(2) From my education, that is the result of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, I have a conception of tragedy that is Greek. To challenge fate, to challenge God, is heroic. *Hubris* is not sin or weakness; it is the pride that enables man to challenge what he believes. I understand that perhaps there has to be meaning in the permanence and mystery of human suffering,[50] or there would be no meaning.

> . . . tragic man would not define himself like the man of corrective comedy or satire, "I think, therefore I am"; nor like the man of achievement (epic), "I conquer, therefore I am"; nor like the religious man, "I believe, therefore I am"; nor like the man of sensibility (the romantic), "I feel, therefore I am." . . . the essence of his nature is brought out by suffering: "I suffer, I will to suffer, I learn by suffering; therefore I am."[51]

(3) I have been influenced by "existentialism" in literature, by the theatre of the absurd, and by modern art. "God is absent from contemporary art; not surprisingly, so too is man."[52] (4) I must work through the relation of Jesus to the problem of human suffering and divine justice.

I will discuss two levels of the theology of the Book of Job. The first concerns the question: Is there disinterested righteousness? And the second level of meaning concerns the doctrine of the justice of God.

48. Rubenstein, p. 423.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 427.
50. Sewall, p. 6.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 153.
52. Rubenstein, p. 436.

The starting point for both levels is the theory of retribution.

> Job and his friends, worlds apart in many respects, share one belief; the acrimoniousness of their disputation and its minute details are due to this shared premise: the world is founded on justice, i.e., *quid pro quo,* reward and punishment.[53]

The three friends reason that suffering is the result of sin, and Job suffers; therefore, Job has sinned. Also, sin separates a man from God, and Job has sinned; therefore, Job is cut off from God. Some critics claim that "Job certainly has abandoned the theory of an exact retributive justice."[54] But, when Job is most angry and rebellious, he holds on to the doctrine of retribution.

> Was it not still the law of retribution which drove him to demand an explanation in proportion to his existence, a private explanation, a finite explanation?[55]

Job is presented in the Prologue as innocent of any wrongdoing that could make him responsible for his suffering.

> By hypothesis or by construction Job is innocent; he must be in order that the problem be posed in all its intensity.[56]

By contrasting the innocence of Job with the reality of his suffering ("Job is the zero degree of guilt joined to the extreme of suffering"),[57] the Joban poet showed the inefficacy of the theory of retribution. The purpose of the poet was to "put forward a new theory, that the cause of misfortune is not necessarily sin."[58] Suffering is not the result of sin, and prosperity is not the result of righteousness. God has a relationship with a man who is righteous and with a man who is unrighteous.

> God allots happiness and pain without regard to a man's moral character. This leaves the problem unsolved. For no attempt is made by Job to reconcile his suffering with the doctrine of the justice of God.[59]

It is my position that the poet of Job does address the problem

53. Tsevat, p. 97.
54. Scott, p. 136.
55. F. Plotkin, "Judaism and Tragic Theology," *Judaism,* 18, Fall (1969), p. 494.
56. *Ibid.,* p. 492.
57. *Ibid.,* p. 493.
58. Dhorme, p. lxxxi.
59. Kissane, p. xxvi.

caused by the doctrine of the justice of God. This is the second level of theology.

The Book of Job presupposes "the full maturity of an ethical vision of God."

> The clearer God becomes as legislator, the more obscure He becomes as creator; the irrationality of power balances the ethical rationalization of holiness; it becomes possible to turn the accusation back against God, against the ethical God of the accusation.[60]

The idea of God "was rarefied to an actual ethical monotheism."[61] Job "was convinced that God ruled his world in justice."[62] And, because Job was also convinced of his innocence, he could only hold God responsible for the injustice he experienced. Job "impugned the justice of God."[63] Job is at an impasse. He must give up his claim of innocence, so that God can be just, or he must give up the theory of retribution that insures that God is just.

Chapter 28 marks the beginning of the way out of the problem. In the Hymn to Wisdom, Job knows that man cannot find Wisdom, for God alone has been able to discover Wisdom's place. Perhaps the solution is that man cannot know God. Job does not accept agnosticism, because he has known God (chapter 29). In the wisdom song, however, Job recalls "the limits of man's knowledge and the consequent necessity for revelation."[64]

The theophany is the solution to Job's impasse.[65] The speeches of Yahweh answer the question: Is there disinterested righteousness? And the Yahweh speeches resolve the problem of the doctrine of God's justice.

Is there disinterested righteousness? The answer of the poet is no. Job must repent (42:6). "Nothing is said that would imply that Job deserved his misery."[66] Job repents for speaking of things that he could not understand—the justice of God. Job repented for demanding that God be just.

> In contrast with the Promethean myth, the solution of the drama is found not in a change of mind and heart on the

60. Plotkin, p. 492.
61. Kraeling, p. 17.
62. Rubenstein, p. 422.
63. Rowley, p. 193.
64. M. F. Thelen, "J. B., Job, and the Biblical Doctrine of Man," *Journal of Bible and Religion*, 27 (July, 1959), p. 204.
65. Tsevat, p. 81.
66. Pope, p. lxxv.

part of deity, but in the unquestioned submission of man to One with power and knowledge greater than his own.[67]

Is God just? The answer of the poet is that God cannot be contained in the formula, "God is just." "Yahweh is all-powerful and at the same time wise, without the implication that his wisdom includes justice."[68]

God says to Job: "You were not present when the universe was created. You do not know its blueprint or the stuff that went into its making. . . . What, then, makes you assume that it is justice which is its foundation"?[69]

In 38:25-27, Yahweh questions Job about rain that falls on the desert where no human being lives. The animals and nature itself are as important to Yahweh as man.

Rain, in the Bible, figures prominently as a vehicle of reward and punishment. It is given for good deeds and withheld for evil ones. Here, however, the phenomenon is shown not to be a vehicle of morality at all—the moral purpose ascribed to it just does not exist.[70]

God says: "No retribution is provided for in the blueprint of the world, nor does it exist anywhere in it. None is planned for the non-human world and none for the human world."[71]

In exchange for the theory of retribution and the doctrine of God's justice, God offers man a relationship to him, "a way marked out between agnosticism and the penal view of history and life—the way of a faith that reconciles man to God on God's terms, not on man's."[72] Job's answer is his relationship to God, who is not contained by man's formulas. "Job. . . penetrates beyond any ethical vision to a new dimension of unverifiable faith.[73]" The book of Job makes the world amoral.[74]

Dynamic equivalence translation[75]

God. Where are you?
words don't say that it hurts to not know Where are you?

67. H. G. May, "Prometheus and Job," *Anglican Theological Review*, 34 (October, 1952), p. 246.
68. *Ibid.*, p. 241.
69. Tsevat, p. 98.
70. *Ibid.*, p. 100.
71. *Ibid.*
72. Plotkin, pp. 493-4.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 493.
74. Tsevat, p. 102.
75. I wrote this after I had just come home from the first day of my friend's trial.

Are you there?
words don't talk about the fear I fear You are not there.
Where are you?
Help. I don't understand.
Sally's trial started today.
There is only one woman on the jury.
At the recess Sally's friends, Libba and Fritz from Charlotte, said something about you, God, being stronger than a defense lawyer, and I wanted to be sick. Where were you?
But Sally told me a long time ago (it was the day after she was raped) that maybe it was testing or maybe there was a purpose for why it happened?
You weren't there. Why do you have people think that you are there? But how do I explain how Sally could be so strong, if you were not with her?
But there's a difference!
You were with Sally in love, but that does not mean that you are responsible for good things or bad things that happen to her.
You are with her in both.
But you are not responsible for what happens.
Justice. Who knows what that means?
The man who raped Sally—what will be justice to him?
I guess you're with him too.
God, how could he laugh at the things Sally said he had done to her?
It won't cost her a dime. And it won't cost you a dime either, God.
I'm angry. Where are you in my life then?
Come to me in the night, but, no, I would be too afraid if you did.
I want to say that you might be laughing now too, God.
I'm not angry because Sally was raped. I think that our learning needs to be changed, so that the word virgin doesn't mean anything, so that a woman is not made unclean by intercourse.
I'm angry because this has changed Sally so much. Because of how we have grown up, she cannot not be affected by this.
Justice.
To Sally—what does justice mean?
She told me that while he was hurting her she tried to love him, because Jesus said to love your enemies.

I don't want him to spend his life in Central Prison.
Why couldn't he talk with a doctor who could help him?
And I'm angry that his lawyer is trying to make Sally responsible for what happened and pretending that nothing happened that was wrong for her.
Is that justice?
And I don't believe that whatever happens will be justice or for the best. With J. B., I want to say that the only worth-while things are the friendships and relations of help and love that have happened.
The man at the gas station talked to me, and he said that I could come back tomorrow if I needed to talk again.
I caught myself tonight, I wanted to ask you why all of this was happening to Sally. And then I remembered that that is not a question to be asked.
But, God, when I think about my time in the hospital when I met Ann and Steve and Jack, I think that it must have been a miracle—it must have been you—
because, before, I had never had a relation like those that now are possible and give meaning and purpose to my life.
If I say that you are responsible for those good things that happened to me, aren't you responsible for what happened to Sally?
I guess I need to think in different ways about you—
that you are not responsible for those good and bad things, but that you created me to the possibility of good and bad things.
That is your part. And you love me.
But how do I know you love me, unless it is by the things you do?
But I know that isn't right.
I know that my mom loves me because I am her daughter, so she must. Is that how I am supposed to know that you love me?
Why doesn't Betty know that you love her too?
God, there are so many things that happen in a life time.
Natural things and relational things.
Hooray for friends!
But then there are hard things too.
Is it that I just can't understand because it is so much larger than me? You must (but I'm not supposed to say that either) have an idea about how life can be and should be
that I just don't see.
I remember last Christmas. There was a magazine with pic-

tures of the events of the year. One was of a South Vietnamese girl holding her child; he was dead. And I wanted to be sick, because she was a girl, like me, finding out about love and sexual love, but men destroyed what she had learned.

Where were you, God?

God, where was I?
is justice
where was I, God?

Implications for the present

The Hymn to Wisdom, 28:1-27, in its present position before the speeches of Yahweh, is a statement by faith about doubt and lack of faith. Therefore, it has meaning today.

The first time I read chapter 28, I thought that the Joban poet expressed what I could believe. God alone possesses Wisdom. Man is not able to find the place of Wisdom and understanding. "This is closely associated with the acknowledgment of man's inability to understand God."[76] Man cannot know God. Agnosticism seemed to me to be the only acceptable position toward God.

Agnosticism was an alternative for the Joban poet, who lived in a time as confusing and unsettling as the twentieth century. Perhaps at first he accepted agnosticism. That the poet did not remain with this solution, however, is shown by the position of the Hymn to Wisdom. Chapter 28 is in the middle of the Book of Job. "The problem of the suffering of the innocent is everywhere in the book. Where is the answer? It is *a priori* probable that it is found at the end."[77]

It is imperative to the meaning of the Book of Job that the speeches of Yahweh follow the wisdom poem. The Hymn to Wisdom establishes that man cannot find Wisdom and understanding. Only God has Wisdom. Man does not even have Wisdom enough to find God. Man requires revelation. The speeches of Yahweh are the revelation. The theophany establishes that God is in relationship to man and that God gives Wisdom to man as a gift.

The Hymn to Wisdom and the speeches of Yahweh together teach four things. (1) There is "an absolute chasm between the understanding of man and the ways of God."[78] (2) Man

76. Battistone, p. 144.
77. Tsevat, p. 79.
78. Rubenstein, p. 422.

must understand his place as a creature of God. By means of the theophany, "Job is brought into full realization of his own creatureliness."[79] (3) God enters into relationships with persons. (4) God's relationship to a person is not a function of the person's righteousness or of God's justice.

The Hymn to Wisdom and the speeches of Yahweh together offer men and women the possibility of not accepting agnosticism or atheism. Persons do not have to accept "the deism which appears to be J. B.'s final stance toward God or the romantic exaltation of the will to live and of mutual human love."[80] And people do not have to accept the new gods that mankind will make.

Rubenstein maintains that "Job does not provide a helpful image for comprehending Auschwitz"[81] and by extrapolation for comprehending post-industrial society.

> The experience of our times has exploded our ancient categories of the meaning and dimension of both human suffering and human evil.[82]
>
> World War II technology was but a crude anticipation of the incredible material and psychological efficiency of contemporary instrumentalities available for dehumanization and mass human waste disposal.[83]

This is demonstrated by the automated air war carried out by the United States against North Viet Nam.

Rubenstein explains that the people who are destroyed by war or hunger or hatred cannot take Job as their symbol, because Job lived through his trial. They can only take as their symbol Job's children "who perish simply because God wants to win an argument."[84]

Rubenstein, like Job, has determined to hold on to the meaning (or a-meaning) of the experience of Auschwitz and to hold on to the doctrine that God must be responsible for what happens to men and women. And so he has had to distort the concept of God: "the biblical God is nothing and of no account save as an objectification of biblical man's conflicting self-image."[85] Rubenstein concludes that other gods will rise

79. Battistone, p. 61.
80. Thelen, p. 203.
81. Rubenstein, p. 421.
82. *Ibid.*, p. 434.
83. *Ibid.*
84. *Ibid.*, p. 424.
85. *Ibid.*, p. 427.

to serve the twenty-first century. He suggests Dionysus and Apollo.[86]

Speaking of the three friends, Rubenstein explains that "there is a fundamental issue at stake in their refusal to alter their inherited theology in the light of real evidence to the contrary."[87] Job did alter his theology. He repented of trying to make God conform to a human formula—God is just. In the same way, today we need to alter our theology and to say out loud that God is not responsible for what happens in the world. Man is responsible.

> Neither hope for reward for good deeds nor fear of punishment for evil deeds; moralists cannot shake the wicked from the surface of the earth and God will not. The laws of the natural order and those of the moral order are not of a piece. If you decide to do what is good, do it because it is good.[88]

And at the same time we need to say out loud that men and women are in relationships to God, because God has revealed himself.

86. *Ibid.*, pp. 436-7.
87. *Ibid.*, p. 426.
88. Tsevat, p. 102.

Resource Kits and Packets on Women and the Church

by MARTHA MONTAGUE WILSON

For books and periodicals see Martha M. Wilson, "Women and the Church," *The Duke Divinity School Review,* Vol. 38, No. 2 (Spring, 1973), 100-102.

An asterisk (*) below indicates items available from the Service Center, 7820 Reading Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45237.

Women: Perspectives on a Movement. Sarah Bentley Doely, ed. THESIS, Creative Educational Resources, P. O. Box 11724, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15228. $12.95 for kit (includes cassette tapes, leader's guide, and study resource packet). Additional study resource packets (one needed for each group member) $.95.

Six-session course which emphasizes small group work and individual experience. Cassette tapes give input in the form of interviews, conversations, and group discussions, Interviewed are outstanding women, such as Eleanor Holmes, Norton, the Commissioner of Human Rights for New York City, and Dr. Sandra Tangri, a professor of psychology. Sessions cover economic, political, and social issues, sex-role stereotyping in children, church and theology, identity, and changing life styles. Background readings and consciousness-raising exercises help participants become involved in exploring their own feelings and perspectives. For women's, men's, and mixed groups.

**Women: Issues and Concerns.* United Methodist Women. $2.00.

Covers childcare, unemployment, politics, church, minority and ethnic group women, and many other topics.

**The Woman Packet.* Church Women United. $1.50.

Articles, bibliography, and consciousness-raising exercises.

Women and the New Creation: A Study Course on Identity for Women in the 70's. Presbyterian Distribution Service,

225 Varick Street, New York, NY 10014. $0.50 each for 1-9 copies, $0.30 each for 10 or more to the same address. Men can be included in this study of identity.

Women. United Ministries in Higher Education, P.O. Box 187, Dayton View Station, Dayton, Ohio, 45406. $1.50. Women's concerns all around the world.

**Women Exploring Theology.* Church Women United, Box 134, Manhattanville, N. Y. 10027. $2.00. Materials from a conference.

**Study Packet on Abortion.* Women's Division and Board of Christian Social Concerns, United Methodist Church. $1.00. Articles, statistics and facts, suggestions for additional resources, church documents and discussion questions.

The Core. United Church of Christ, Task force on Women, 297 Park Avenue South, New York, NY, 10010. $1.50. Articles, fact sheets, and worship resource.

Book Reviews

Women and Worship. Sharon Neufer Emswiler and Thomas Neufer Emswiler. Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc. 1974. Cloth $5.95. Paper $1.95.

Women and Worship provides all Christians, laypersons and ministers alike, with an excellent introduction to the problems involved in the use of language in worship that is heavily loaded with masculine references. The Emswilers note the effect of sexist language on women, its relationship to the Biblical witness and its narrow portrayal of God. They particularly emphasize the relationship of Jesus to women, pointing out the difference between his affirmations and the way we express them through worship. The publication of this work is the recognition that

> Sexist worship, as worship is usually conducted in most churches today, goes against the teachings of Jesus. If we want to follow our Lord in treating women as whole persons, significant in the eyes of God, we must begin today to affirm the worth of women within the context of worship (p. 19).

This concise and creatively written book is a fantastic resource for ministers, lay leaders, and study groups, not only because it facilitates an understanding of the problems involved with sexist language, but also because it supplies good examples of non-sexist prayers, affirmations and responses. In reading and using these resources one fully appreciates the value of non-sexist liturgies and perceives the more complete proclamation of the Christian faith through them. The following is an example of one of their invocations:

> God, you're here, waiting for us. Before we ever thought of trying to find you, you came to meet us. We're entering a treasured ritual now. It may be out of habit. It may be that someone forced us to come here. For whatever reason, we are here. Capture our minds and hearts and wills, so that we may worship you honestly and meet you truly. In the spirit of Christ. So be it. (p. 50)

Women and Worship also includes several complete worship services on such themes as "Celebrating God" and "Finding Acceptance and Self-worth from God." Each service furnishes suggestions for the various parts of the liturgy as well as the sermon and encourages adaptation and further creativity, depending on the individual congregation.

Despite the validity of using non-sexist hymns, liturgies, and sermons in worship services, difficulties arise. To call God "Mother" or "Parent" will definitely offend some people. Therefore, in order to use non-sexist language effectively in worship a congregation must be well-instructed regarding the purpose, meaning and value of these changes. The Emswilers underline that this process of informing and sensitizing a congregation regarding non-sexist language is one that must be handled very lovingly. At times it will be frustrating and slow. Yet no matter how slow and discouraging this process might be it is well worth it to any person who is seri-

ous about including all people in the worship of Jesus Christ.

—Carol Miller Lipscomb
Duke M.Div. student

Women and Jesus. Alicia Craig Faxon. Pilgrim. 1973. 126 pp. $4.95.

Faxon attempts to ascertain Jesus' view of women by examining briefly all of the passages in the canonical gospels which deal with women. The view which she derives from this examination she commends as the understanding contemporary Christianity should have toward women. The book also includes an initial chapter on Old Testament heroines, Deborah, Jael, Esther, and Judith, and a chapter on women in the early church, which deals primarily with Paul's understanding of women. Although this is not a book of sermons, Faxon's technique is for the most part homiletical. She begins each section by quoting the Gospel passage. She then gives brief character sketches of the women involved in the passage and frequently includes historical background material. Finally she makes specific application of the Biblical text to the present day situation.

She concludes that Jesus' attitude towards women is seen in his consistent treatment of them as fully equal to men and as complete individual persons in their own right. This attitude stood in marked contrast to the usual second-class citizenship treatment of women in the first century and particularly in first-century Judaism. It also stands in contrast to the attitudes of Jesus' immediate followers and the Christian Church down through the ages. In an epilogue Faxon claims that the basic problem with the position of women in present-day society is not chiefly the fault of male oppression but women's own low self-image and lack of self-esteem. If women would hold themselves in the same esteem that Jesus held for them, they would achieve liberation much more easily and quickly than they currently are.

Although the author is well educated, she is not a Biblical scholar. Her treatment of the Biblical text is largely uncritical. She treats all of Jesus's encounters with women in all four Gospels as historical. She completely fails to notice that the four evangelists display different attitudes toward women. She makes no comment on Luke's extremely favorable attitude toward women and his inclusion of much more material about them than the other evangelists include. In her brief discussion of Paul's attitude toward women she makes no distinction between Pauline and Deutero-Pauline epistles, even though two of the most important passages on women are in letters of questionable authenticity (Ephesians 5:21ff., I Timothy 2:11-15).

Faxon's hermeneutical method might best be characterized as a popularized form of Bultmannian existentialism. She quite naturally and un-self-consciously demythologizes the supernatural elements in the Gospel accounts. For example, she writes, "Mary Magdalene was possibly a multiple schizophrenic, who had been cured by Jesus in the same way as he had cast out demons from the Gerasene demoniac (Luke 8:26-39). The term 'possessed by demons' was the way the Jews explained the confusion and mental strife of the multiple schizophrenic" (p. 85). Nowadays, with Satanism, voodoo, and *The Exorcist*, one must ask whether multiple schizophrenia is in fact the way twentieth-century Western rationalists explain the confusion and mental strife of demon possession.

Faxon is correct in her conclusion that Jesus treated women as whole persons and equals to men. Yet her implications that Jesus stands in some sense as a precursor of the women's liberation movement are open to serious question. In all the sayings attributed to Jesus he never questions the accepted role of women in first-century society and never suggests changes in that role. His calling of twelve disciples, all male, is the clearest example of this. Though Jesus was as deeply concerned personally with individual women as with men, he showed no interest in any social movement for the betterment of women's position in society. In some ways Paul, despite his apparent inconsistency, is a better model for the women's liberation movement than Jesus. Some of Paul's statements such as, "there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28) and "Husbands should love their wives as their own bodies" (Ephesians 5:28, if Ephesians were written by Paul), are truly radical within the context of the first century, when wives were often considered as no more than property.

The best audience for Faxon's book would be local church laypersons and groups, particularly women's groups, interested in the topic. More thorough and scholarly presentations of this topic are available in the works of Leonard and Arlene Swidler. One would hope that more thorough and critically informed popular treatments of the topic would be forthcoming.

—John Christian Wilson
Duke Religion Ph.D student

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The Minister as Scholar

by Thomas A. Langford

Scholarship is a vagrant term. It means different things in different settings; it represents diverse activities; it serves multiple ends; it possesses chameleon traits. I realize that I have now made relative one of the few things you thought had a permanent character. Anyone, you thought, knows what scholarship is. Let me describe the embodiment which has probably come immediately to your mind.

Scholarship is the vocation of a few people who like old books and quiet places. The scholar is an impractical person. Given to solitude, he or she moves naturally to a library carrel or a smelly lab, has contracted posterior deadness, and possesses patience for sustained, minute research. The interests of the scholar are usually narrow in focus, often esoteric, and always shared with a small in-group. Bemused by the real world, and lacking in gregarious instincts, the scholar is to be protected by administrators, listened to by students, and helped across the street by old ladies. But he or she is always to be respected. There is a tradition of respect (a respect which often has a slight wisp of amusement in its incense smoke); there is an expectant sense that something important may come from studious research—although the scholar probably will not recognize its full value and certainly cannot apply its significance. Every campus needs a few of these people—they make for good conversation at the reunion parties—but no campus could survive with too many. You might be willing for your sister to marry one, you would worry about your brother if he did, and you are glad your spouse didn't.

That's the caricature—and like all caricatures it takes a few real features and enlarges them into misshapen oddities. Furthermore, it is an inadequate caricature because it has chosen features of only one type of scholar—and one almost as extinct as the quiet, ivy-covered men's campus with aged fraternity houses and daily chapel—but insofar as it exists it is valid and honorable.

The Opening Convocation sermon preached in York Chapel, September 4, 1974.

The truth of the matter is: there are a number of roles for scholarship, a multitude of types of scholars, and diverse methods of study and communication. To initiate our thinking we need to recognize that scholarship is responsible study which serves clearly envisioned goals, and which is as varied as the persons—with their varied contexts and competencies—who undertake its tasks. And we need to add that all scholarship is legitimate which utilizes the resources of the person and the data so as to enrich understanding.

Now, when we speak of the "minister as scholar," we must first recognize and accentuate the personal and situational distinctiveness of the minister's place; we must understand the goals this scholarly task is attempting to serve; and we must understand what responsible study means and the ways in which it may be developed by those in ministry. Throughout we must continue to recognize the necessary diversity of scholarship, and this especially in the ministry and among ministers. There is no portrait which adequately represents even this limited vocational group.

First let us look at the context of the ministry and its distinctive claims for scholarship.

The Borderland

The minister lives on a borderland, a boundary where different territories abut, a place on the edge of other places. This is the habitation of the minister of the gospel; the place of the one who bridges the distance between the theologians and the laity; the place where one is given responsibility for bringing the sharp edge and the tender embrace of grace upon misformed, and unformed, and reformed human life. There is a borderland which will be your place if you are a minister, a terrain upon which you will live, a necessary place, an uncertain place.

Now, obviously, there are many borderlands. As with a segment of an immense chessboard or geodesic design, we all stand in relation to adjunctive socio-cultural realities on every side; so, for instance, the academic theologian (when I use this term I refer to all of the disciplines of theological education) has his or her particular boundaries upon which life takes place—a fact of which Paul Tillich eloquently reminded us in an autobiographical statement. Scholarship in an academic community has its special place, but for the moment

we are concentrating on the borderland which the minister —such as a parish minister—occupies. And we shall want to ask: how may he or she be a scholar?

The borderland where ministerial life is lived is both treacherous and ill-defined. It is uncertain terrain, a place where most people prefer not to step and where only a few are willing to remain. It is difficult territory, always demanding and constantly challenging. But it is the land of the minister. By necessity, by vocation, by the need to serve, the minister is always there.

Jose Ortega y Gasset once claimed, "Tell me your landscape and I will tell you who you are." Everyone must have a *locus standi*, a place to stand, a place from which he or she will view and serve the world. So the minister must find a standing place in the borderland from which he or she can operate. To occupy such a place is no easy matter, for it is the land of the interpreters—the go-betweens—and they who would be interpreters possess the freedom and bear the responsibility in it. Reaching from preparation to proclamation, holding the theologian by one hand and the congregation by the other, attempting to grasp the tenuousness of scholarship and the tenuousness of human existence, moving from skill and technique to the hurt and hope of personal life—these are the activities of the borderland.

Such a borderland is vague and obscure in its demarcations. One can enter sometimes without realizing that he or she is there, but, more possibly, one can leave without knowing that he or she is no longer there. In fact, there are always temptations to move away from the boundary. It is difficult to take the abstractions and exactitudes of the academic scholar and translate them into concrete, vivid language—language which can be heard or read or lived with understanding, and engagement and responsive commitment. It is difficult to take the impact of life and set it in relation to the gospel; or the thrust of the gospel and set it in relation to life. The temptation which confronts one who occupies this unstable terrain is to move fully to one side or the other and, thereby, escape the conflict and frustration of interpretative activity. Standing between academe and the earthly city, one is tempted by the exclusive attractions of each.

The temptation can lead ministers to play the game of "pluralistic religious free enterprise" (Peter Berger) and come to

terms with their hearers by modifying their product in accordance with consumer demands. Or one can refuse to become accommodated, and move toward entrenchment behind theological or ecclesiastical structures where life is more controllable even if more limited.

To live in the land of the interpreters is no easy matter, and it requires a profound sense of God's presence; it requires an unusual creativity; it requires a keen sense of historical humanity.

The Place of Presence and Creativity

The most fundamental fact of borderland existence I want to mention only briefly: namely, to live on the border requires a profound sense of God's presence. Only the fool-hearted choose such a place without a sense of vocation. For this is the sort of place where footing is difficult to find and where endurance is a signal virtue. Borderland existence requires a sense of the presence of God, otherwise it is impossible.

To be in such a relationship and in such a place carries responsibility, and the minister who lives in the borderland is especially challenged to be creative. There are many more things that might be said of life on this boundary, but for this time I want to concentrate on one dimension: he or she who would convey the Christian gospel has an obligation to be a creative interpreter.

The minister (and I intend the term as shorthand for the full range of ministerial roles) must be creative. I use this word not primarily in the sense of cleverness or aesthetic innovativeness or private sensitivity; I use it rather to imply the mediation of new understanding and the creation of new situations. Interpretative activity requires imagination and inventiveness, but always for the purpose of bringing about a new reality. The creativity of which I speak is indigenous to ministry; the gospel needs active, engaging, challenging conveyance of its message and its vitality if new life is to occur.

Such communication is attempted in every ministerial expression, whatever its particular mode. I am reminded of the architectural directions which were prepared in the 1950's for the new Coventry Cathedral. (Parenthetically, the first great church at Coventry was started by that earlier streaker, Lady Godiva—so streaking may serve some good cause.) The directions for the architectural competitors said in part:

> The Cathedral is to speak to us and to generations to come of the Majesty, the Eternity, and the Glory of God. God, therefore, direct you.
>
> It is a Cathedral of the Church of England. In terms of function, what should such a Cathedral express? It stands as a witness to the central dogmatic truths of the Christian faith. Architecturally, it should seize on those truths and thrust them upon the man who comes in from the street.

Creative activity should convey the gospel to "the man who comes in from the street," for that is the task of ministry—whether that ministry is expressed in word, in architecture, in painting, in practical activity, in political organization, or in pastoral counseling. Such interpreters might be poets or politicians, a John Donne or a Martin Luther King, Jr., they might be ministers in Atlanta, Washington, Kansas City, or Durham. And as they undertake the task, one can only say with the Coventry committee, "May God be with you in this great matter."

The tasks of the church are many and each task has its own integrity. Each part of the body needs the other parts. So one must understand the relation of seminary education to the practice of ministry in other forms. The academic theologian, for instance, provides materials, understanding, criticism, and structures for the interpreter to use. The interpreter takes these materials and innovatively casts them into communicable form. The theologian is an engineer (dealing with foundations, stress factors, and quality controls), the interpreter is an architect (developing plans for edifices—or sermons or activities—which enrich sensitivity and invite to use).

Now let's talk directly, let's talk about ourselves. The academic theologian needs the creative minister. The word of life must be transported across the borderland by the interpreter. What the creative communicator can do is to find fresh ways of stating and applying truth. And theology today requires this with particular urgency. Let me be frank. The characteristic academic theological utterance is a longish book or a technical article. It assumes that the reader (and it is usually a reader) has a rich intellectual background, is trained to think clearly, cares about nuances, is gifted with uncommon powers of concentration, and has a requisite amount of time. But for most of the laity these conditions do not obtain. Macaulay once commented about Spenser's great poem, *The Faerie*

Queene, "Very few and very weary are the readers who are in at the death of the Great Beast." The same can be said of many theological writings—especially as they are studied by laity.

But it is important that theology should be understood by the woman and the man from the street. It is necesssary to entice their attention and then to mold the gospel with the help of theological reflection into a presentation—of word or act—that has some value. Because you must build a strong and rich base, your seminary years are critical. You should expect a careful, thorough, demanding curriculum, and this in basic areas. For, in the final analysis, what you have to say and do is more important than how you say or do it. Because you must utilize these materials in your own way and place, your unique contribution is crucial. You should expect a careful, thorough, demanding experience in ministerial life. For it is through this experience that your mind and heart will be fully prepared; and it is through this experience that your communication will be effective.

Creative interpretation does not come out of a void; rather, it always counts upon rich resources. The resources for Christian communication come from the scriptures, the tradition, the interpretations, the worship, the liturgies, the rituals, the symbols, and the service of Christian faith. It is the academic theologian's task critically to evaluate, recount, construct, reconstruct, systematize, analyze, and restate this inheritance. It is the creative interpreter's task to take this more abstract or historically distant or carefully precise work and translate it for concrete human experience. Great works of literature always possess greatness by taking a concrete human person and exposing the reality of that person in such a way that others recognize not only the authenticity of the person portrayed but also see common human characteristics in the specific embodiment. And the same is true for significant interpretation.

Arthur Koestler, that provocative dilettante, in his study of creative activity, says that the act of creation is found in the intersection of matrices, so that two expected things come together to form an unexpected, new thing. The borderland is the place where this transformation and humanization takes place. It is on the border where the intersection of theology with ordinary life takes place. It is in the borderlands where theology is given its most concrete embodiment.

James Denny, a Scots theologian at the turn of the century, said he would like to go into every church, hold up the cross, and say, "God loves like that." Theological education should teach you what this means, for there is a once-for-all character of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus; but the interpreter must translate that uniqueness into a multitude of concrete applications and learn to say, "God loves like that, and that, and that, and that." This is a demanding task, and it takes sensitivity and training and experience and effort to achieve it.

The inhabitor of the borderland attempts such concrete and innovative interpretation. In human brokenness, grace is shared; in violated relationships, new hope is given; in the agony of search, a presence is felt; among immoral structures, new order is set; in the midst of guilt, forgiveness is spoken. And all of this must be set within the context where those to whom you minister live; it must be spoken in language which many different people can understand; it must be used to construct meaningful community; and it must be done in such a way that attention is arrested and understanding achieved.

Perhaps we all share an Archimedean desire. Perhaps with somewhat more humility, but almost certainly with less intelligence, we can say with that ancient Greek, "Give me a place where I can stand and set my lever, and I can move the world." You who are ministers have been given such a place—by grace. You are called to live in this place—by faith. And you will survive in this borderland—by hope. You have been trained for a rich and demanding habitation.

Live creatively in that land.
Study, study hard,
    let nothing detract from your integrity
    and from your unique place,
Divide with wisdom the word of truth.
And may the God of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
Amen

CONTINUING EDUCATION SERVICES JANUARY-JULY, 1975

Programs at The Divinity School:
Courses, Seminars, Conferences, Workshops, Institutes

"EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES IN THE CHURCH—Mondays, January 20-April 21, 7:30-9:30 PM. Divinity School course (Christian Education 221) open to ministers, educational directors, church school teachers and leaders. Auditor's fee, $40. Professor John H. Westerhoff III.

CONFERENCES ON THE SMALLER CHURCH—February 13-15. Divinity School Faculty, with NC and WNC Conference Town and Country leaders. Ministers Thursday-Friday; Laity Friday-Saturday. Leadership, parish development, small church education.

"THE PASTOR AND THE CHARISMATICS"—February 24-28. In-residence seminar led by Divinity School Faculty, with Dr. Ross E. Whetstone, Board of Discipleship, and other visiting resource leaders.

PERSONAL GROWTH LABORATORY FOR BLACK CHURCH LEADERS—March 31-April 3. Leaders, Professor O. Kelly Ingram and Dr. Wm. Derek Shows. Dr. Joseph B. Bethea, Director.

COMMUNICATIONS WORKSHOP—April 2-4 (tentative). Sequel to 1974 Workshop, for NC and WNC Conference Communications leaders and Divinity School community.

"COMMUNITY, WORSHIP, AND MISSION"—April 9-11. Spring Lectures by The Very Reverend Edward H. Patey, Dean of Liverpool Cathedral (1971 Hickman Lecturer).

CAMPUS MINISTRY INSTITUTE—June 28-July 4. Professor John H. Westerhoff, Director, with Dr. Peter Gomes, Minister to Harvard University, and Dr. Donald W. Shriver, Candler School of Theology, Emory University. For campus ministers.

SUMMER INSTITUTE IN CHURCH EDUCATION—July 6-18. Professor John H. Westerhoff, Director, with Professors Thomas A. Langford, McMurry S. Richey, D. Moody Smith, Jr. For professional church educators and parish ministers.

SUMMER INSTITUTE FOR MINISTRY—July 7-11, 14-18. Biblical studies, theology, parish and community, preaching: "Preaching in the Community of Faith," with Professor John K. Bergland. For ministers, spouses, laity.

Albert Outler, D.H.L. (Duke)

Duke University does not award many honorary degrees to divines, perhaps least of all to professors who have left it to go elsewhere. The bestowal of a D.H.L. last May on Albert C. Outler, who preached two baccalaureate sermons over Commencement weekend, paid tribute not only to a Methodist theologian and ecumenical statesman, but to a faculty member retiring this year from a "rival" seminary as a lifelong personal and professional friend of Duke. The editors of the REVIEW are proud to publish one of those two sermons, as a tribute to him and as a typical challenge to his countless former students and perennial admirers. —C.L.

* * * *

Albert C. Outler was born in Thomasville, Georgia, in 1908. He received the A.B. degree from Wofford College in 1928, the B.D. from Emory University in 1933, and the Ph.D. degree from Yale University in 1938.

He began his academic career with his appointment to the Duke Divinity School faculty as instructor in 1938, was promoted to assistant professor in 1939 and to associate professor in 1941. During his stay at Duke he played a notable role in developing and strengthening the academic programs of both the Divinity School and the Graduate School curriculum in Religion. In 1945 he accepted appointment as associate professor in the Yale Divinity School. Three years later he was appointed to Yale's Distinguished Timothy Dwight Chair of Theology, and elected Fellow of Silliman College. In 1951 he accepted an invitation to Southern Methodist University as Professor of Theology, a position he held until his retirement in 1974.

Outler's scholarly interests and competencies are wide-ranging. Among his peers he is primarily acknowledged as one of the outstanding theologians of his generation. Through his teaching, writing, lecturing, and vigorous participation in numerous professional societies, he has exercised an influential leadership role. In addition to scores of scholarly

articles, he has published six books. He has received appointment to twenty-nine named and endowed lectureships, including most of the prestigious lectureships in the field of Religion (e.g. James A. Gray Lectures at Duke in 1961). Among the numerous learned societies to which he has belonged, including Fellowship in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, he has served as President of the following: the American Theological Society, the American Society of Church History, and the American Catholic Historical Association, the first Protestant to hold office in the last-named society.

As a Methodist clergyman he has been called to numerous tasks of leadership within his denomination, on both the national and international scenes. Beyond this he has been one of the most highly respected and influential American Protestant church leaders in the ecumenical movement. During the last twenty-five years he has served with distinction on numerous working commissions, and has been a leading spokesman at the major ecumenical assemblies in America and around the world. In particular, at assemblies of the World Council of Churches in Lund (1952), New Delhi (1961), and Uppsala (1968), and at the Conference on Faith and Order in Montreal (1963), his influence was strongly and constructively felt. In 1962-65 he was one of the few Protestant churchmen invited to attend the Second Vatican Council as a delegate-observer.

Outler's unusual distinction as an ecclesiastical statesman, both within his denomination and in the ecumenical setting, has not been achieved at the expense of his role as scholar. Indeed his major contribution, and the recognition it has evoked, has been due in large measure to the remarkable coalescence of these two roles in one man. In the many church assemblies where his presence has been felt, he has embodied those qualities which he has with unrelenting consistency commended as the *sine qua non* for all ecclesiastical deliberations; namely, intellectual integrity, responsibility, and honesty. His unusual intellectual endowment and his loyalty to sound learning, in congruence with his warm commitment to the conscientious and thoughtful delineation and resolution of the real issues confronting the Church in the world, have informed and shaped his career as one of the most notable religious leaders of the day.

FRANKLIN W. YOUNG

An Effectual Calling?

by Albert C. Outler

One of the real attractions of President Sanford's gracious invitation to join you in this commencement—apart from the honor involved and a nostalgic love for Duke that has lingered over the years—was the notion of a *special* commencement sermon for the candidates for "professional degrees." For this symbolizes a problem all too often settled by assumption in our universities and not reflected on as deeply as it deserves: viz., what it means to be a *professional person*—in your own self-understanding and in the world into which you are headed.

This particular service, then, is one of a cluster of ritual events designed as a landmark in your lives. A great university is in the process of certifying that you *are* "professional persons," with all your various degrees and fields, and it is laying its own reputation on the line in doing so. It is saying —to you and to society—that you have crossed that magic threshold between the tyro and the expert, between general competence and a speciality, between literacy and real learning—or however you would want your new status defined. All of us also understand the futuristic aspect of the event: we realize that you aren't all that expert *yet*; we know that your special competencies are more fledgling than fully fledged. Even so, you *are* moving now from one slope of a watershed over to the other and you're being launched off into your budding careers with respectable credentials.

And what does it all mean? What will it amount to? What is it that your transcripts and diplomas will be trying to tell the rest of us about your professional capacities, motivations, prospects? How *did* you get started on the adventure that has brought you to this hour? What will keep you hanging in there for the rest of your life, if, indeed, you do? What is it, if anything, that will set you apart now from the generality of folk in our contemporary society? These are real questions that will

The Baccalaureate sermon for candidates in the graduate and professional schools, Duke Chapel, May 11, 1974.

affect your personal and professional identity from here on, and they deserve pondering.

Occasionally on an airplane (or elsewhere) a stranger more inquisitive than most will ask me, "What is your line of work?" Sometimes the answer—that I am a professor—stops the inquisition then and there; not many people are eager to know what a professor professes or what else he thinks, either. If I take the other tack—"I'm a minister"—this daunts some and opens the sluices for others. Some of my medical friends tell me that they often fudge in such circumstances, lest they be exposed to unsolicited rehearsals of symptoms. Lawyers pose a different problem: our popular stereotypes of lawyers are so diffuse that the bare fact of being a lawyer is not a conversational gambit by itself alone.

But what is it that is being groped for in these casual queries about another person's career? What will *you* have become, tomorrow afternoon, when that "professional degree" is finally conferred?

Our ordinary language on this point is hopelessly confused. The Random House Dictionary has as its first definition of "profession": "a vocation requiring knowledge of some department of learning or science." But definition #2 is as follows: "*Any* vocation or business." The most one can make of this performance is that the profession of lexicography does not require enough logic to distinguish between particular and universal predicates! Then, there's the equally confusing distinction between "professional" and "amateur"—which implies that "professional" is defined by one's eye on his bank roll. Only the other day I was reading one of those tell-all pieces about "hit-men"—in which it was commented that these are "*professional*" killers (largely, one gathers, because they do it for money and in cold blood!).

Nor do the traditions of the original professions, as they come down to us from their medieval origins, shed much light, either—for they emerged in a class-conscious society largely as escape mechanisms whereby people might evade or transcend the normal social predeterminations of their birth and breeding—a sort of merit system within a caste-system. But that past is long gone now, and the modern professional often gets caught both ways in a society dedicated to an egalitarian dogma. Intelligence of sorts—and special skills such as yours—are still thought prerequisite in most professions, but the

notion of a professional élite flies in the face of our egalitarian creeds. Who today, for example, would buy old Plato's notion that we should have philosophers for rulers or that philosophers should *be* rulers? Many an evening after Cronkite, I am tempted to suppose that almost anybody could rule us better than those now in power *or* their critics. Still and all, it would never occur to most folks to make philosophers, clerics, or medics their first three alternative choices to those mobs in Washington—or elsewhere. Indeed, one of the richest comic veins in American anti-intellectualism over the centuries has been the "over-educated" parson, professor or doctor—with lawyers often exempted for reasons we'll leave to explore some other time.

Meanwhile, the traditional professions have lost ground to a whole host of new ones: technologists in prolific species, realtors, beauticians, journalists, ad-men, etc. Some of these have come a long way in short order: journalists from Grub Street to the status of a fourth branch of government, ad-men from brazen to plausible deceivers. Thus, a "professional" would seem to be almost anybody who claims to be—and who is accepted as such by any sizable number of other people. Even the Academy has joined this populist tendency. We are busily bestowing masters' degrees on people who haven't really mastered anything—doctors' degrees for curricula once denominated baccalaureates.

No wonder, then, that many professionals are left threshing about in an identity-crisis or that many have openly allied themselves with the market place: its practices and values. We are increasingly hard pressed to justify our professional aspirations in altruistic terms—or to reaffirm those traditional standards that once defined our roles. This is doubly tragic in a society that is tearing itself apart and also as you try, even now, to project your future out to that point, a decade or so from now, when you may find yourself reassessing your choice of a career—perhaps when it's too late for a really satisfactory alternative. None but the bovine (or the predestinate) escape such second and third vocational re-assessments—and I've seen cows staring at dogs with what *may* have been their equivalent of retrospective wonder!

I suppose that my most earnest exhortation to you is simply this: for God's sake (and humanity's) don't settle too easily for the notion that professionals are all those people listed in the *Yellow Pages* (or even in *Who's Who*). Don't discard

too readily whatever that prime motivation was that first set you on the road leading to *this* place and time—and that is, even now, opening up a special sort of future for you. There is something noble at work in that mysterious alchemy of interests, intentions and self-understanding that mixes into any *deliberate* choice of a given professional career: something not altogether self-serving and not the simple sum of one's aptitude tests. You chose—in whatever sense you are willing to use the verb "to choose"—to *be* a professional person: something like that professional person you have begun to become.

I hesitate—largely on your account (not mine)—to use the word "calling" in this context. It seems to conjure up for many people caricatures of experiences they have never had: inner voices, epiphanies—*that* sort of thing. And yet most of us (Skinnerites always excepted) know that there is something uniquely human and free about our basic decisions. Our choices of careers, or mates, or locales are always influenced by a host of accidental circumstances, but they still finally turn on some inner sense of the valid consonance between who one thinks he is and *what* he would really like to be. Otherwise, it was not a truly *human* decision.

A professional, therefore, is a person who has chosen a service role in society—for pay, to be sure, but with a taproot of loyalty to the public good and to his profession's significance for that good. Odd as it may sound, the professional is a man of *virtue* (or at least of virtuous aspirations). In making his vocational choice, he somehow tipped the balance between self-aggrandizement and self-investment toward self-investment, even if only by a little. I know ministers who never were on any Mount of Transfiguration who nevertheless give themselves in ways disproportionate to their earthly rewards; this is part of what is meant by the phrase, "a *good* minister." I know doctors who do not vary their patient-care to fit their fees: their scruples and standards are plugged into a different circuit. I know lawyers whose basic love of justice often betrays them into idealisms they may not often profess in public. And so it goes, for all the good professionals that I know.

What it comes down to, then, is this: a true professional is a person with a code, a conscience and a commitment, all intended to be life-long. A professional finds part of his life's essential meaning *in* his work (by contrast with those whose work is the distasteful price they pay for "making a living"

in order to find meaning elsewhere and otherwise). A professional has a freedom freely joined to a sense of professional responsibility: to his discipline and to a covenant with his peers as to what the standards of excellence in that discipline require of him.

The true professional's conscience is the distillate of the demands he lays upon himself: his motivations, intentions, self-criticisms. It is that inner disposition of his heart and will that has been informed by the traditions of his calling but even more profoundly by his personal concerns for an optimum human good. A true professional is one whom the rest of us can trust to do his best, in every circumstance, with or without reward or applause. He is the doctor who scorns impersonal routine, the minister who doesn't bother to notice who's watching, the lawyer convinced that justice is more than the will of the strongest, the engineer who will not settle for minimums, the professor whose curiosity outlasts his lifetime and whose delight in learning and teaching is never jaded.

The true professional's commitment is a life-long covenant to keep on learning and sharing and exploring as long as his calling and life's breath hold out together. He can take criticism without panic for he knows that it is his own competence that must assess the integrity of his work. Moreover, since he has internalized the norms of his profession, he is *self*-critical in a way that allows his *next* effort always to be better than the last.

Now, I'm sorry it sounds so quaint in a society that has sanctified self-seeking, but the plain fact is that you (i.e., the honest-to-God professionals amongst you) are persons *under self-denying vows!* The Hippocratic oath is sometimes scoffed at nowadays, but if ever it comes to be wholly disregarded, then we'll all be at the mercy of the unscrupulous just when we are the most helpless. A minister's ordination vows exceed what we actually expect of him, but if he were not under those vows, I'd not want to be under his ministry. The lawyers' oath at the bar doesn't weed out the shysters, but it verbalizes a commitment on which society depends more desperately than we sometimes remember. A Ph.D.'s diploma is a certification that here is a person with scholarly tastes, habits, and a conscience that will guide a whole life time of inquiry and teaching —not from outside pressures but from one's own inner norms.

I know, of course, the shadow side of all this idealistic talk as well as you do. I've lived with professionals all my life, and

I know myself well enough to be ashamed of our foibles, failures and treasons. And yet with all our flaws (which could serve for another sermon) I'm still convinced that deep inside our professional codes and commitments there is an implicit religious dimension that needs to be made explicit, rather than left unavowed or tongue-tied. The true professional is (or might better be) a *religious person*: in both the Latin sense of *religare* (to bind oneself to values that are more than utilitarian) and also in the Judaeo-Christian sense of religion as the hallowing of life (our stewardship to God for talents, time, vision, and all the rest). However far short of our professional ideals we may fall, it is just those ideals that continue to remind us of our grounding in a moral, spiritual universe, our accountability to God's righteous judgment, our radical dependence upon *his* grace and providence.

On their basic level, therefore, our professional values are personal and inward. On a second level, they are oriented and evaluated. Only on a third-level are they market oriented—which is not to disparage the market orientation by a whit. But you can write it down for a rule that any man whose primary orientation is the market place is not a true professional, whatever his label!

But if this is true, then we are talking about religious faith as the ground and atmosphere of a true professional's mindset and lifestyle: as the vital balance in one's life between *eruditio et religio*. We are talking about one's awareness of God's encompassing grace and of his moral purposes in and for his human family; about one's inner dedication to values that are cherished and validated by something over and beyond affluence, fame or fortune. For this is faith—to be aware of the Holy and to trust its promptings in all our efforts in the hallowing of life—all of life. And this is love: that life—all of life—shall be served as if it were sacred, as indeed it is.

One version of the Golden Rule for professionals could be framed by imagining the kind of person you'd want to deal with in a crunch, when you need someone more expert than a good friend, something more personal than a machine, somebody more reliable than a wheeler-dealer. Your answer here will tell you a lot about your own professional conscience and commitment. Let me run through a few of my own answers and see how they match yours—and let that serve for our conclusion, for now.

The professionals I've known and respected and am still most grateful for—in the ministry, medicine, law, teaching, technology, whatever—have, first and foremost, been people with liberal culture and a humane spirit. They have been people who had learned how to learn and how to teach, forever lured on by new intellectual and spiritual horizons. The academic colleagues I cherish most (including some I remember most gratefully from my Duke days, like Shelton Smith and Harvie Branscomb) were men whose delight was in tireless inquiry and mind-opening insights. It was from them that I learned the radical difference between the true and false joys in the academic life and my life has been the richer for this and will be—to the end.

The best professionals I have known have had no fixed prejudgments as to the limits of human achievement, and so have never accepted anything as quite good enough. There's a hint of perfectionism in all the great ones—along with gracious realism about our human shortfallings. And always there's this extraordinary power of *attention* (to their patients, parishioners, clients, students, experiments, research projects—whatever) that keeps their navel-gazing down to a decent minimum. Whenever I see a person literally absorbed in a socially significant and self-normed project—and only marginally distracted by what else is going on about him—it's a safe bet that I'm watching a real pro at work: somebody I'd trust with more than my money!

Finally, the best professionals I know are persons of authentic religious faith (some of whom are embarrassed to confess that faith because they're still confused as to the difference between what they think they remember from Sunday School and their own contemporary mindsets). But, their codes and consciences have radii that reach out into that encompassment of mystery and grace in which we all live and move and have our significant human being. Over and beyond earthly rewards and satisfactions (which they do not despise), they've a sense of being upheld and justified by the same redemptive love offered to us all by God in Christ—God's Holy Spirit sustaining us in all the agonies and ecstasies in any life worth living, any death worth dying. And so we may look for our final assessment, not to our peers, but to That One who has the right finally to judge and finally to justify: "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter into the joy of thy Lord."

It was in something like this faith that the second century Christian who wrote II Peter formulated *his* prescription for a truly effectual calling in this life, a formula that may serve *us* as a valid code for true professionalism, even today:

> Add to your faith virtue, knowledge to virtue, self-control to knowledge, fortitude to self-control, dedication to fortitude, brotherly kindness and love to them all. These are the gifts which will save you from useless and barren knowledge . . . from becoming short-sighted and blind. . . . And this is why it really is worth whatever it takes to make your calling and election sure . . . in the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (II Peter 1:5-11)

Let us pray:

> Almighty God, who art thyself truth, love and all good, give us that love of truth that will lead us into true freedom and into that love of mankind that will sustain us throughout our life-long covenants of service here in the making—in gratitude and joy, through Christ our Lord.
>
> Amen

Conversing with the Text

Old Testament Exegesis—a Part of the Pastor's Job Description

by John Bradley White (M.Div. 1972)

Foreword:

A few years ago, James D. Smart wrote a perceptive and disturbing book entitled *The Strange Silence of the Bible in the Church* (Westminster paperback). The problem is, he said, not that the Bible is being deliberately ignored, but that the pastor is often unable to recover a meaningful Word from it. Visits to various churches in the Durham area have convinced me of the correctness of Smart's perception. The intent of the morning Scripture Lesson and the content of the sermon are often only remotely related. And increasingly the central task of ministry, interpretation and proclamation of the Tradition, is being replaced by skills in which the pastor feels more competent: counseling, community organization, parish administration, etc.

Although it is uncomfortable for me to say so, part of the fault may lie with biblical scholars and seminary curricula. Courses in biblical studies have tended to focus entirely upon the *historical* meaning of the text, and influential scholars have denied that the *contemporary* meaning (if any) was their proper task. (see, e.g., the article "Biblical Theology, Contemporary" in *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. I, pp. 418-432.) Courses in homiletics have tended to focus upon sermon construction and communications skills to the neglect of the central problem of the transition from *then* to *now*. Indeed, without that central concern, seminaries have, perhaps justifiably, seen no reason why homiletics should be a required course. And commentaries have usually been at one of two extremes: either grammatico-historical but theologically tone-deaf, or shallow popularizations by persons ill-equipped for the scholarly task. Very seldom has a single scholar-churchman felt the need or had the courage to approach *both* meanings of the text in print.

This two-part article is an attempt to aid alumni of the Divinity School and others in overcoming their not-strange "silence" about the Tradition. Written in two installments by graduate students in our Department of Biblical Studies, it will attempt (1) to describe in comprehensible language the rationale and methodology for the recovery of the historical meaning of the biblical text (installment I), (2) to discuss various assumptions evident in a transition to a contemporary meaning, and (3) to illustrate both through the study of a specific text (installment II).

I invite your remarks about the appropriateness or helpfulness of this project, since the materials will be used for instructional purposes within the Divinity School.

LLOYD R. BAILEY

* * * *

Conversation involves both speaking and listening. When two people stand face to face, each being able to look the other "in the eye", conversation has the best opportunity for success. In this situation, not only direct speaking and listening take place, but also awareness of bodily gestures, speech inflections, calm or nervous expressions, etc., which one or the other of the participants might have. Such physical observations are part of the communication process. Yet, even in direct confrontation, one person may easily fool another into thinking one thing when something entirely different is meant. Consequently, when the element of sight is taken away and people are not face to face, communication is made more difficult. In a telephone conversation, the listener may not catch the irony which the speaker is seeking to convey, or the speaker will be unable to see a cynical gesture on the part of the listener. Going a step further, when the conversation is contained in a letter, the ambiguities and possibilities for misunderstanding become more apparent. Although the words are there on paper, the inflection of the writer, the circumstances of the writing, the "state of mind" of the writer, the wit, a tongue-in-cheek comment, or a joke may not be fully apparent. The reader may misrepresent part of the letter or lift a portion of the letter out of context. The goal of conversation, communication, is thus very difficult to achieve.

When St. Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, some in the Corinthian church did not fully understand what Paul was attempting to communicate. The evidence for such a misunderstanding comes from Paul's allusion to his disastrous visit to the church (2 Cor. 2:1) which caused him great personal sorrow (2 Cor. 12:14-21; 13:2) and his severe letter which cost him many tears (2 Cor. 2:4; 7:8). In 2 Cor. 1:13, Paul urges his readers to listen carefully to his words ("I hope you will understand fully.") lest more misunderstanding should take place (pastors should take heart that even Paul's sermons did not reach every parishioner!). If the problem of misunderstanding was a reality to parishioners in the first century world of ideas, who were aware of the conditions in the Corinthian church, then how much more difficult it is for contemporary church people, living in the present century, to understand Paul's letter! For persons of the twentieth century, the difference of life-style, and the variance of world-view, not to mention the problem that we have only a copy of copies (hence, no autograph, the original written by Paul) of his letters, make communication of Paul's message to contemporary believers a most difficult challenge. Yet as pastors, communicators of God's message *in this age*, such a task is our burden and such a challenge is our responsibility.

The first step toward understanding Paul's words, however, is that we *not* forget who we are. We cannot surrender our present in an attempt to jump into the first century. Such an attempt would be doomed to failure, not only because we would be sacrificing our knowledge about the world, but also because we would cease to view honestly our own needs and human condition. When we accept as literal the apocalyptic imagery that Paul uses to portray the coming of Christ (cf. 1 Thes. 4:13-17), we have rejected a scientific view of the universe. Likewise, when we overemphasize Paul's directives to the Corinthian church (e.g., the veiling of women, 1 Cor. 11:4-12) and attempt to lift these from the first century into the present, we sidestep concrete issues that face the contemporary Church (such as, e.g., the oppression of women in society even *by* the Church). Instead of retreating in embarrassment because our world-view may be contradictory with that of the first century, we need to be keenly aware of our human condition (political, sociological, spiritual, etc.), so that we will be able to direct the Gospel's power to these areas of our life. In seeking

a conversation with Paul by means of his letters to the Corinthians, we cannot begin with a dishonest view of *ourselves.*

A second step in an attempt to understand Paul's letter is that we must realize that Paul's words were not directed to us but to the people in Corinth, i.e., to a particular place, set of circumstances, and time. Instead of overlooking the spirit and mentality of Paul's world, we need to be keenly aware of the *ancient setting* and environment of the text. Conversation with Paul demands that we do not have a dishonest view of *Paul and his age.*

It is the aim of biblical exegesis to make conversation possible with an ancient text. In order to achieve "true communication", however, one *must* use the exegetical method, i.e., arrange a conversation between the interpreter (and his or her world) and the text (and its world). Such a conversation must involve both speaking and listening. On the one hand, exegesis aids us in the proper framing of questions which one must address to the text. Questions such as the following will allow the meaning of the text to *come forth* (the Greek verb *exegeomai*, thus the English "exegesis," means "to lead out"): "Who is speaking?"; "To whom?"; "Under what circumstances?"; "What type of literature is it?"; and "Why were the words preserved?". Questions such as these aid our *listening* to the text so that we may hear the "inflection" of the words or even "see" the "gestures" of the speaker. This dialogue of addressing the text and listening for its answers is the process of exegesis. It is, indeed, a conversation with the text, and it should be the *only* way we, as contemporary interpreters, approach Scripture.

The purpose of this article is to develop a conversational method which can be helpful in the communication process, and to illustrate the type of dialogue necessary to understand what the text meant and what it means. The goal is to produce a usable guide in sermon preparation by a pastor. Although the focus of the article will be upon the Old Testament, the method itself will prove valuable for New Testament study as well.

Why is such an article needed? Although there is a wealth of material which deals with individual exegetical skills, this article will place "under one roof" a complete exegetical outline. But more than that: the "how to" aspect of biblical exegesis, although very important to master, only scratches the

surface of the questions that must be raised. The question of method in exegesis is merely a catalyst to other fundamental questions with which the student of Scripture must come to grips. From the perspective of the Old Testament, among these important questions are the following: (1) How does the Christian exegete understand the tradition of the Old Testament, particularly when the Old Testament is used as a source of Christian preaching? (2) What are some of the presuppositions which are involved in moving from conversation with the text to the sermon itself? and (3) How can we as pastors deal with exegesis when we work under a severe time limitation (how quickly Sunday comes!) and when so many other important matters demand time in the parish setting?

The Exegetical Crisis[1]

A generation of pastors who have cut their "theological teeth" on *crisis* theology, as neo-orthodoxy is often called, and who have recently read of the "crisis" in the Biblical Theology Movement, which Brevard S. Childs has described,[2] may well not wish to entertain another crisis! But, unfortunately, we do find ourselves in an "exegetical crisis". Neo-orthodoxy (the Barthian movement in particular) emphasized the theological content of the Bible (the Word of God theology) and was, in part, a corrective to the scientific and technical historical-critical movement of the Nineteenth Century. Yet within recent decades the theological meaning of the biblical text (i.e., what it means

1. Cf. George M. Landes, "Biblical Exegesis in Crisis: What is the Exegetical Task in a Theological Context," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, XXVI (1971), 278-289.

2. Cf. Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology in Crisis* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1970). Childs notes that there has been "a period of slow dissolution" taking place within the so-called Biblical Theology Movement for almost two decades (p. 87). Among the crises which face biblical theologians are the following: (1) the problem of revelation in history (Eichrodt versus von Rad); (2) the problem of what unifies the Bible (covenant, various theologies, Yahweh); (3) the problem of a distinctive biblical mentality (Semitic versus Greek thought); and (4) the growing isolation of the theological meaning of the text from the technical methodology employed by biblical scholars. For further reading cf. the following: Langdon Gilkey, "Cosmology, Ontology, and the Travail of Biblical Language," *Journal of Religion*, 41 (1961), 194-205; J. Christiaan Beker, "Reflections on Biblical Theology," *Interpretation*, XXIV (1970), 303-320; James Barr, "The Old Testament and the New Crisis of Biblical Authority," *Interpretation*, XXV (1971), 24-40; and Roland E. Murphy, "The Role of the Bible in Roman Catholic Theology," *Interpretation*, XXV (1971), 78-86.

for today's men and women of faith) has been increasingly isolated from the scientific and technical side of biblical study. As a result, the work of many biblical scholars has not proved helpful to the pastor who is engaged in the proclamation of what the Word means for modern humankind. To a great extent, much recent biblical criticism has reversed the Barthian emphasis upon the theological meaning of the text. The first aspect, then, of the "exegetical crisis" is the separation of the critical investigation of the text from the task of affirming what the text means in our modern setting (i.e., the theological meaning of the text). A second aspect of the "exegetical crisis" deals with the changing role of the parish minister in relationship to the preaching of the contemporary Word to the Church. We must now investigate both of these aspects of the "exegetical crisis".

First of all, exegesis, as taught in seminary, has been frequently limited to the historical-critical method, and theological matters (What is the interpretation, *hermeneutic*, of a given text?) are not addressed. For example, in a typical course in which an Old Testament book is studied in the original language, class time is usually consumed by linguistic questions (admittedly very important), to the virtual exclusion of the theological import of the text.[3]

The gap between the technical analysis of a text and its theological meaning becomes particularly significant when one begins to discuss the question of the viability of biblical theology. Can biblical theology say anything to the modern believer regarding the variety of contemporary human problems that face society and the believing community? Krister Stendahl has gone so far as to say that the function of biblical theology is merely descriptive (i.e., technical), asking only the question, "What *did* the text mean?". For Stendahl, any question of the Scripture's normative meaning (i.e., "What does the text mean for today?") is considered the task of systematic theology![4] This distinction does not understand exegesis as conversation, i.e., as the *communication* of the meaning of the text to the interpreter's own situation. Stendahl's exegete must be a person who never engages the text with anything but a technician's tools. The conversationalist (although armed with his or her tool box!) also brings himself or herself (a subject), a context (a pastor

3. One should note Landes' personal reflections, p. 279.

4. Krister Stendahl, "Biblical Theology, Contemporary," *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, A-D (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), pp. 418ff.

searching for God's message to a particular people) and a credo (a belief in God's guidance in the life of humankind). The conversation which takes place cannot become chaotic, because it takes place within the boundaries of specific questions which the interpreter brings to the text.[5] More importantly, conversation can never become a sterile "operation" on the text, for the "give and take" of the conversation always makes the interpreter vulnerable to being challenged and threatened by the text itself!

Unfortunately the structure of seminary education aids the compartmentalization of exegesis as a technical science, for there is often little dialogue with other areas of the theological curriculum (e.g., pastoral psychology, theology, Christian ethics, Christian education, etc.). The result of defining exegesis as a purely descriptive endeavor, only interested in the past meaning of the text, has been to increase the chasm between the biblical and other fields and, even more serious in its consequences, to expand the gulf between the pastor and the biblical scholar.[6]

In order to overcome this isolation of exegesis, one must emphasize exegesis as conversation with the text: a speaking and listening. For example, the following areas may be helpful in expanding the range of conversation: "Does the text reflect ethical themes?" (cf. e.g., Mic. 6:6-8; Pss. 15 and 24; Prov. 8; etc.); "What is the canonical setting of the text?" (e.g., How does the entire Book of Isaiah function theologically as a unit within the canon?); and "What is the history of interpretation of a given text?" (How is the text understood by the New Testament, the Mishnah, the Church Fathers, etc.?).[7] When one asks

5. The boundaries and limits of exegesis as conversation are discussed by J. Louis Martyn in a paper, "An Open Letter to the Biblical Guild About Liberation," which will appear in the forthcoming *Festschrift* for Paul Minear, edited by Paul Holmer.

6. As biblical scholarship grows more and more technical (the centrality of Ugaritic studies for Old Testament study, for example), one can expect the gap between pastor and scholar to widen unless each realizes the responsibility he or she has to converse with the text (both what it meant and what it means).

7. Cf. Childs (pp. 102ff.) for his proposal for "canonical criticism." A very helpful work dealing with the role of the canon in exegesis is J. A. Sanders, *Torah and Canon* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972). A recent survey of current perspectives in Old Testament theology is Gerhard Hasel, *Old Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972). John L. McKenzie's *A Theology of the Old Testament* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1974) is unique in that it undertakes a theology of the Old Testament after the critiques of Childs and others. He concludes that Old Testament theology should find its "center" in the *person* of Yahweh (p. 23). Old Testament ethics is an area which needs more investigation. A recent volume edited by J. L. Crenshaw and J. T. Willis, *Essays in Old Testament Ethics*,

the question regarding the contemporary meaning of the text ("What does it mean today?")—if that question is to be fully answered—the interpreter must inquire and take into account what the text has meant to other interpreters in other periods. The Biblical text is a living document, i.e., a witness to God's activity which has been interpreted throughout the history of believing communities (both Jewish and Christian). In the sense that conversation with the text includes conversation with other interpreters (Augustine, Rabbi Akiba, Wesley, Jonathan Edwards, Luther, Barth, etc.), exegesis is indeed a *mutual* conversation. Our listening to other interpreters (including our own colleagues in the ministry and our parishioners!) aids one's understanding of a text in the present and makes exegesis an *on-going process.*

Victor Paul Furnish has reminded us that one should not speak of "*the* exegesis" of a passage, but of "*an* exegesis".[8] If exegesis were done by an omniscient robot, using technical, descriptive methodology, one might well speak of *the* exegesis of a text. A modern interpreter's conversation with the text, however, demands that he or she return again and again to the text in order to gain further insights about it. Upon returning to a given unit the pastor may not merely correct a previous conversation but may discover new insights because of a different set of priorities or demands which must now be addressed. Once again there is an element of control which does not allow the dialogue to become subjective. That element of control is the proper framing of questions asked of the text.

The second focus of the "exegetical crisis" concerns the growing complexity of the minister's role. In many forms of ministry, and even in the parish, the pastor often no longer envisions *the* primary task as the delivery of the Sunday morning sermon. However the exegetical method which we are describing is not merely for one who prepares sermons. In fact, in whatever form of ministry one may be engaged, conversation with the text should be *the* means by which the Bible is utilized.

J. Phillip Hyatt, *In Memoriam* (New York: KTAV, 1974) seeks to fill this void and direct more scholarly work into this area.

8. Victor Paul Furnish, "Some Practical Guidelines for New Testament Exegesis," *Perkins Journal*, XXVI (1973), p. 3. Furnish also correctly points out that the distinction between exegesis and exposition (characteristic of *The Interpreter's Bible*, for example) should be avoided, for linguistically the words denote the same process, i.e., interpretation (p. 2).

The interpretation of the biblical tradition is essential to all forms of contemporary ministry, and from unique situations, the interpreter may bring unique priorities to bear upon the text (e.g., from industrial ministry, clinical pastoral psychology, institutional chaplaincy, teaching, etc.).

For the parish minister the crisis is often seen in the frustration which many pastors experience with exegetical method viewed *only* as a technical procedure. With the growing demand for specialization and the accompanying reduction of time to spend in study and reflection, many pastors who conscientiously seek to use the Bible properly are justifiably disgruntled. If every exegesis, by definition, is to require the analysis of *every* commentary, a vast knowledge of ancient languages, and the resources of a theological library, can one realistically expect such exegesis to be utilized in a pastor's sermon preparation? No, because frustration with the method would produce "instant exegesis", which is another word for eisegesis: the reading *into* the text of one's own preconceptions rather than letting the text communicate in proper dialogue.[9]

Because the meaning of a text is never self-evident, a thorough analysis of the text is *always* demanded. Therefore exegetical method, properly understood, can never be rejected! Although exegesis is a time-consuming endeavor, it need not be cause for frustration. The interpreter must seek to deal with as many critical questions addressed to the text as possible during sermon preparation. In exegesis that is conversation, moreover, the pastor must not only consider the technical questions but also must never cease to be excited, astonished, and even flabbergasted at how the text informs the contemporary situation. The integration of community concerns into the dialogue taking place provides the possibility of a creative encounter between interpreter and text. Our frustration with method should end when we hear the text addressing us!

In the study a pastor should, consequently, attempt to develop exegetical skills and apply them in every instance that Scripture is utilized in ministry. Exegesis is not, therefore, a "one-night stand" which resulted in a seminary term paper. On the contrary, it is the continuing conversation that we as pastors have with the biblical text. Although one can spend a semester "doing" an exegesis of a passage (remember that some scholars

9. Landes, p. 298.

will spend a life-time on the exegesis of a few verses!), exegesis is the *life-style* for ministry and for the proclamation of the tradition. As one assesses the experiences and the common life of the parish, one is involved in the exegetical process. The mutual interaction which takes place between pastor and context (church, family, community, nation, etc.) becomes part of the concerns that are brought into the conversation with the text. Such conversation is a style of theological activity which includes every facet of ministry and the whole of a minister's life.

Unfortunately the failure to use the proper exegetical method has led to misuse of the Old Testament in preaching and has inhibited its value for Christian congregations. When the Bible is used uncritically, often the Old Testament is not seen as having integrity apart from the New Testament message. There is a danger that the Old Testament will be "Christianized" by interpreters in such a way as to pervert the original message of the text. How often, for example, has Noah's behavior in Gen. 9 been classified as "unchristian," particularly by those preaching on the evils of strong drink? Likewise the danger becomes very apparent when one hears the "let *us* make man" in Gen. 1:16 interpreted as the first appearance of the Trinity in the Bible! In terms of the lectionary cycle, quite often one might assume that the Old Testament has a predictive function. Note how many Advent texts are from the prophets (Mal. 3:1-7b; Isa. 11:1-10; Isa. 62:10-12; Isa. 9:2, 6-7), giving the implication of prediction. Similarly, the Old Testament readings for Lent often reflect the "suffering servant" passages from Deutero-Isaiah (cf. 52:13-53:12). Conversation with the text demands that we engage in dialogue with the Old Testament in a spirit of honesty toward its integrity as it witnesses to the faith of our spiritual ancestors. Our reading of Isa. 9:6 should include the recognition that the young prince mentioned there is perhaps Hezekiah, in whom Isaiah sees the embodiment of Yahweh's care for Israel (just as a later community recognized that same concern in the incarnation of Jesus Christ). Old Testament exegesis which properly engages in conversation with the text calls for a creative use of the Old Testament tradition and a maintenance of the Old Testament's *own value*. D. Moody Smith, Jr., has recently written the following: "Where the Old Testament is ignored, an understanding of man as creature, indeed as historical and societal creature, usually disappears, and

the New Testament is wrongly regarded as only a handbook of personal piety and religion."[10]

Searching Out A Useful Exegetical Method

"True exegesis involves, of course, much sweat and many groans."[11]

—Karl Barth

One of the drawbacks to outlining exegetical methodology is that the implication arises that exegesis has a rigidly defined sequence. Although a sequential questioning of the text is often helpful and should be followed if possible, conversation and dialogue may ebb and flow in unstructured ways. Consequently, the interpreter's conversation with a text must flow with the current caused by the interaction between exegete and text (no sequence, therefore, should be canonized!).

The first step in the conversation process is to listen. How does one isolate a text to which he or she may listen? Although the question of the precise structure of a text must come after other preliminary questions have been asked, one can initially and tentatively isolate a text by using helpful paragraph divisions in English Bibles (warning: these divisions may not reflect the divisions of the Hebrew Bible nor does any paragraph division automatically constitute a strictly defined unit of material [cf. below, p. 37]), or by utilizing the text unit given in a particular lectionary. The reader should note, however, that these suggestions are tentative and are useful only as an aid to "get into" a passage. Upon further study and reflection a passage may be expanded or reduced as a unit is more strictly defined.

In beginning to listen to the text it is often helpful to read the text from several translations aloud and perhaps even write the text down. One should listen to the "soundings" which arise uniquely from the text itself. One should, therefore, listen for certain themes (justice, righteousness, mercy, confession, obligation, forgiveness, etc.) which may be present, for changes in speaker or mood which may indicate multiple authorship

10. D. Moody Smith, "The Use of the Old Testament in the New," in *The Use of the Old Testament in the New and Other Essays: Studies in Honor of William Franklin Stinespring*, ed. by J. M. Efird (Durham: Duke University Press, 1972), p. 65.

11. Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, trans. by Edwyn D. Hoskyns (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 17.

or the beginning of another unit, and for the harmony of the passage in relation to the material surrounding it (Does the surrounding material have the same theme, speaker, mood, etc., that is found in the passage under study?). In a listening session with the text an interpreter must "come clean" with himself or herself and face the text with an honest self-image. Such honesty demands that the interpreter bracket all preconceived notions which one might hold regarding the text. Also no hasty conclusions should be reached regarding the implications that the text might have for one's community or personal life. The danger in a preconception or an early conclusion is that the exegetical process might become short-circuited. If conversation with the text is to be helpful to the pastor, we must respect the text's integrity in order not to force an interpretation upon it. After a true listening to a text, one may be surprised at the direction *the text* moves the interpreter! Listening should issue in some type of response on the part of the exegete. Questions should arise out of the listening process which one may wish to record and refer to at other points during the conversation. Moreover it is only *after* listening that one should begin to consult secondary literature. Although a good theological library is important, there is no substitute for one's personal question-and-answer session with the text.[12]

Although there is not (and should not be) one standard exegetical outline, the reader may find the next six areas of study helpful in the framing of questions to direct to the text. *Text criticism*, the first of these areas, is a necessary task for all interpreters because (1) no autographs of the biblical text survive; consequently, the transmission (first oral, and then written) of the text has made possible a variety of errors, and (2) the idiosyncrasies of the Hebrew language (its script, phonology, orthography, etc.) cause serious problems for the trans-

12. For most pastors the luxury of being able to use a theological library is a rare privilege. For one's personal library good investments are commentaries and reference works. Perhaps the most useful one-volume commentary is *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, ed. by Raymond Brown, Joseph Fitzmyer, and Roland E. Murphy (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968). A standard multivolume work is *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962). A supplement to IDB which will update many articles and expand various entries is expected to be published by Abingdon Press in 1976 under the editorship of Keith R. Crim, V. P. Furnish, and Lloyd R. Bailey. Among the helpful commentaries on various books of the Old Testament are the following series: The Old Testament Library Series (Westminster Press); Hermeneia (Fortress Press); and The Anchor Bible (Doubleday).

lator. Unfortunately text criticism is neither used nor appreciated as it should be because (1) people who do not know the biblical languages do not feel equipped even to begin text criticism, and (2) the general (but mistaken) feeling among students is that all textual problems have been resolved.[13]

The aim of text criticism is to establish the most reliable (quite often the oldest) text. For the most thorough job of text criticism, a knowledge of the biblical languages is necessary in order that a comparison may be made of the ancient witnesses: Targumim (Aramaic); the Peshitta (Syriac); the Septuagint (LXX, Greek); the Vulgate (Latin); etc.[14] Since we cannot return to the *ipsissima verba* (very words of the biblical speakers), text criticism can aid us in problems caused by (1) conflicting witness of the ancient versions and (2) various scribal errors which have crept into the text.

Although it is impossible to describe every problem that may beset the Masoretic text (MT) in the scope and purpose of this article, the following examples may serve to emphasize the importance of adequate text criticism. Often there are accidental errors which may be present in MT. Metathesis (location-exchange) of consonants is one example (cf. e.g., Middle English "aske̊d"; Modern English "asked"). One should consider the textual variant in Prov. 14:32: "The wicked man is overthrown through his evildoing, but the righteous finds refuge in his 'death' (MT: *môt*), 'integrity' (LXX: *tôm*)." The consonants *m* and *t* have been incorrectly reversed in either the MT or the LXX. Which is the original and which is

13. A very helpful guide for text criticism for persons who do not know the biblical languages is Lloyd R. Bailey's unpublished paper for use by students in the introductory Old Testament course at Duke University Divinity School entitled "Text Criticism (for the beginner, who knows little Hebrew or Greek)." An attempt has been made to incorporate some of Professor Bailey's suggestions into this discussion.

14. With the discovery of the documents from Qumran and their subsequent publication, cf. *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert of Jordan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955—), the publication of Targum Neophyti by A. Diez Macho (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Ciertificas, 1968—), and the appearance of the expected volumes of the Syriac Old Testament (published by the Peshitta Institute of Leiden University), the process of comparing various other witnesses to the text will become more exciting and accessible for all. Also the publication of *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (an up-date of BH^3, now appearing in fascicles) should prove most helpful to the person who uses Hebrew in his or her sermon preparation. One should not discount the work of scholars such as Mitchell Dahood and Marvin Pope (among others), who are making important contributions to Hebrew philology in their work with North-West Semitic languages.

the metathesized error? If the MT is correct, it should be pointed out that one would then have evidence for a belief in life-after-death (most scholars reject a concept of after-life in the Old Testament). Also one should note that the Syriac, in this instance, agrees with the LXX. The MT reading is probably in error and one should read with the LXX, *tôm*, "integrity" (cf. Prov. 19:1; 20:7; and 28:6).

Another common accidental error in the text is haplography ("half-writing"), the omission of an element, particularly if two parts of a sentence are similar. A possible example is Gen. 47:16 where the MT reads as follows: "And Joseph answered, 'Give me your cattle, and I will give to you in exchange.' " The context suggests that the word "food" be understood, and the word is indeed in the LXX and the Samaritan Pentateuch. What possibly took place was that the scribe wrote "(give) to you (*lkm*)" and then his eye skipped the similarly sounding and appearing word *lhm* ("food"), which immediately followed.

A third type of error is caused by the nature of the Hebrew script, in which the consonants often originally were not divided into words. Usually consonant division would be clear from context, but occasionally ambiguity was possible, thus accounting for a variant in the versions. A common illustration is Amos 6:12, where the context suggests a negative answer to a rhetorical question. The MT reads, however, "Does one plow with oxen?". The "with oxen" (*bbqrym*) of the MT should probably be divided into *bbqr ym*, which would read properly with the context: "(Does one plow) the sea (*ym*) with oxen?". Here the negative answer is apparent.[15]

As one begins to investigate the text of a given passage, it is important to note that a mere survey of different translations

15. For a brief discussion of some of the errors which can be present in a text cf. D. R. Ap-Thomas, *A Primer of Old Testament Text Criticism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), pp. 41ff. and Martin Noth, *The Old Testament World*, trans. by Victor I. Gruhn (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), pp. 349-355. On the development of the Old Testament text, one should consult Shemaryahu Talmon, "The Old Testament Text," in *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, Volume I, ed. by P. R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 159-199. One of the most helpful volumes on the printed texts of the Old Testament is B. J. Roberts, *The Old Testament Text and Versions* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1951). A volume which supplies general introduction to the problems in Old Testament text criticism (but heavily emphasizes the role and importance of the Septuagint) is Ralph W. Klein, *Textual Criticism of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974).

will not always reveal the textual variants of a given text. Although differences in translation result from one translation's use of a variant reading, differences can also result from the choice of words used by the translators to render the same word in the text. Translations, both ancient and modern, may reflect eisegeting (the conscious or unconscious "reading in" of personal belief) on the part of the translator. The MT, for example, reads in Deut. 26:5: "A wandering Aramean was my father, and he went down to Egypt." This same verse in the LXX reflects the translator's interest in the third century conflict between the Seleucids (Syrians) and the Ptolemies (Egyptians), for it renders the following: "My father *abandoned* Syria and went down to Egypt." Job 19:25 is a verse which deals with Job's vindication by his redeemer/avenger/advocate at a particular time. Is this time before or after his death? Jerome's Vulgate translation seems to reflect Christian eschatology when he renders the time as "on the last day" (an obvious reference to the end of the world and the resurrection of the dead).

How does the exegete working from English materials track down a true variant? He or she should first consult the ancient versions which have been translated into English (of course realizing that these translations reflect a host of variant readings in hundreds of manuscripts!).[16] The footnotes of most recent editions of English Bibles refer to some *major* textual variants (one should note which reading a particular English version will use). Finally one should consult the variety of secondary literature (articles and commentaries) which may refer to the existence of textual variants in a given passage.

How does one go about evaluating a variant once it is discovered? This question, as fate would have it, is a most difficult area for the person without a knowledge of the biblical languages, but the interpreter can (and must) make useful decisions based on personal research and on the evaluation of data in commentaries and articles. First of all, the *significant* variants which are present in a given passage should be listed, with special note given to original translations (LXX, Targumim) as opposed to revisions of a translation. For ex-

16. For the LXX, cf. *The Septuagint Bible*, trans. by Charles Thomson (Indian Hills, Colorado: Falcon's Wing Press, 1954); the Syriac, *The Holy Bible*, trans. by G. M. Lamsa (Philadelphia: A. J. Holman Company, 1957); and for the Targumim, *The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan ben Uzziel on the Pentateuch* (New York: KTAV, 1968, reprint).

ample, if one finds a variant in both the Old Latin and the LXX, he or she has really only found one variant, because the Old Latin is a translation (a revision) of the LXX (one can note that a little homework on "versions" will be helpful!). Scholarly opinion gleaned from the secondary literature which supports a particular variant should be listed as well. Secondly, the variants and the scholarly positions that support them should be evaluated. In doing so, it is necessary that one proceed to the text to see if it supports the position of scholars. Among the questions one might ask are the following: "Does the context of the word in question support a given interpretation (i.e., the immediate context, the whole Book, the total area of Biblical belief)?"; "Is the *meaning* of the proposed variant proper in the context (compare the range of meanings a word has by consulting a concordance such as Young's)?"; and (if one is to replace MT) "How could it have become corrupted (scribal errors, etc.)?". In the final analysis, one *may* assume that the majority opinion of scholars (particularly if there is near unanimity) is heavy weight to accept or deny a variant reading. Yet the interpreter should never be satisfied with majority opinion until he or she becomes convinced of the argument!

For purposes of clarity the interpreter should seek to use a translation which accurately renders the most reliable text in a clear fashion. The pastor should have a variety of modern translations at his or her disposal. Under most circumstances a paraphrase of Scripture should be avoided, for most paraphrases reflect the theological stance of their authors more than of the biblical text!

A second area helpful in the framing of questions to the text is *literary criticism*. Here the goal of conversation with the text is to discover the authorship, date, and the historical circumstances of a given text. Hence, literary criticism deals with the following important questions: "Who wrote it?"; "When?"; "To whom?"; "Why?"; and "Under what conditions?". When one deals with material from the Pentateuch, the process of literary analysis is often referred to as *source criticism*. This designation refers to the sources called Yahwist, Elohist, Deuteronomist, and Priestly writer.

The problem of multiple authorship is one which must be dealt with in literary criticism. Frequently one may become aware of a change in style or vocabulary or an inconsistency or

duplication which can betray more than one hand on the material. One example of a duplicated story is the familiar one of David and Goliath in 1 Sam. 17. Here two different stories have been blended together in the tradition, and it is the problem of the literary critic to isolate the characteristics of each story. In 1 Sam. 17:12-31, 41, 50, and 55-58 one has a story of David who is introduced as a shepherd (not a musician in Saul's court, cf. 16:23) who takes provisions to his brothers on the battlefield (17:20). There he engages Goliath, the Philistine (vv. 41 and 50). *After* the battle he is introduced to Saul and given a place in Saul's army (vv. 55-58). This version of the story contradicts several aspects of the tale that is given in chapter 16 and the rest of 17. For instance, in 1 Sam. 17:12ff., David's family is introduced for the second time (cf. 1 Sam. 16:18ff. for the first introduction). Moreover, in 1 Sam. 17:12-15, David's father is known as an Ephrathite of Bethlehem, whereas in chapter 16 Jesse is already well known to the reader. Given the contradictory facts of these two stories, it is possible that the verses which intrude in chapter 17 may belong to an alternate literary tradition. In these verses David appears on the scene unknown but ready to become the savior of Israel (not unlike the stories concerning the earlier "judges" of Israel).[17]

Often in cases where multiple authorship might be present it is important to discover a characteristic style, vocabulary, or tone of a given writer or speaker (thus expediting the problem of multiple authorship). A knowledge of certain stock phrases can be helpful in this regard. For example, the Book of Deuteronomy possesses phrases which are unique to the D strata and thus aid in one's recognition of the Deuteronomist, e.g., "love Yahweh your God" (Deut. 11:1); "the commandment which I am about to command you this day" (Deut. 4:2; 11:8; 12:28; etc.); and "the place which Yahweh will choose, to make his name dwell there" (12:11; 14:23; 16:2; etc.).

Often we are aided in the recognition of the date by historical allusions given in the text. The Psalter is an example of materials that originated both from the early times in Israel's history and from the post-exilic period. Ps. 19:1-6 is an example of very ancient material as shown by its dependence upon a Canaanite hymn to the sun (note the imagery of the rising of the

17. For other helpful examples and an interesting introduction to literary criticism, cf. Norman Habel, *Literary Criticism of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971).

sun god in vv. 4-6).[18] Other psalms are more helpful for dating in that they have more apparent historical allusions. Ps. 79:1f. reflects the period after the destruction of Jerusalem ("they have laid Jerusalem in ruins"). Ps. 129, moreover, alludes to an even later period after the return of the exiles to their homeland ("Yahweh is righteous; he has cut the cords of the wicked").

The dating of material is important for the interpretation of a text, since the message is directed to a *specific* people, in a specific time, and in light of a specific set of circumstances (thus, the Bible is not a set of timeless propositions). Understanding of these "specifics" of the writing of a text aids one's understanding of the text's theological perspective. For example, for the Priestly writer, the idea of circumcision becomes crucial because of the crisis of identity within the Israelite community which, in exile, had lost Jerusalem, the temple, and the locale of its stability. By stressing Abraham's circumcision, in Gen. 17:9-14, one can recognize the Priestly attempt to make this symbol authoritative for the whole community (note the punitive admonition in v. 14 that the uncircumcised male was not to be considered a part of the community!). Circumcision, then, was something that the Israelite man would always have with him—a lasting personal symbol of his uniqueness and covenant with God.

The quest for the authorship of a text is aided by an investigation of the theological assumptions or intentions which are present in a given text. The characteristics of God presented by the theologian (or "school' of theologians) we know as the Yahwist are discernible and distinguishable from the Elohist. On the one hand, the Yahwist (in Gen. 2:4b-3:24) emphasizes Yahweh's nearness and intimate contact with humankind. Yahweh is described in very human terms (anthropomorphisms) which almost go so far as to portray Yahweh with human limitations. Yahweh walks through the garden in the cool of the evening, molds Adam with his hands as a potter molds clay and then breathes life into the model, and searches Adam out and converses with him. On the other hand, the Elohist characterizes God in a different way. Whereas the Yahwist emphasized God's nearness, the Elohist visualizes God as more majestic, and thus further removed from the human scene. This majesty is por-

18. Cf. E. Sellin and G. Fohrer, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, trans. by D. E. Green (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968), pp. 284ff. and M. Dahood, *Psalms I* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1965), p. 121.

trayed in Gen. 28:12 in Jacob's dream about God's dwelling place as a throne with the angels of the heavenly king present. Gen. 21:17 describes the Elohist's view that God does not converse directly with humankind but uses intermediaries to convey his message.

The point in one's being able to recognize source (or author) is that thereby one can often discern the intention of a passage *for its own addressees.* The universalism of the Yahwist (e.g., Gen. 12:3, "*all* the families of the earth can gain a blessing through you") reflects a time of prosperity and promise for Israel (the time of the United Monarchy) in which Israel *could* be a blessing to her neighbors (Moabites, Ammonites, etc.) by treating them with justice. Likewise, the prominent theme of "fear of God" (i.e., obedience to God, cf. Gen. 22:8ff.) in the Elohistic writings (cf. Gen. 20:11; 42:18; 50:19; Ex. 1:21; etc.) reflects a later theologian's hope that Israel would be obedient to Elohim ("God") in the face of the danger of syncretism with Canaanite religion (after the time of Elijah).[19] Literary questions, then, lead the Biblical student directly to certain basic theological questions which are indispensable to communicating the meaning of a text.

Form criticism is a third important area of Old Testament exegesis. Form-critical analysis is largely (although not exclusively) based upon the premise that there is a long oral pre-history lying behind much of the Old Testament. This oral stage of literature includes songs, poems, sagas, wisdom sayings, and a host of other types of orally transmitted literature which originated in the folk history and in the scholarly circles of Israel and were only at a later time preserved in writing.[20] The goal of form criticism is to understand the situation out of which a specific type of literature arose, including its long

19. Hans Walter Wolff has written two important articles emphasizing the "kerygma," i.e., the message which the Yahwist and Elohist directed to their contemporaries: "The Kerygma of the Yahwist," *Interpretation,* XX (1966), 131-158 and "The Elohistic Fragments in the Pentateuch," *Interpretation,* XXVI (1972), 158-173.

20. Nevertheless Gene Tucker, a former Duke Professor, has recently warned us that form criticism should not be limited to the oral stage of literature. He notes the following: "Though techniques of form criticism are especially useful in the analysis of the oral stage of biblical literature, they are applicable as well to the written stages and to material which arose as literature. The form critical analysis helps, among other things, to determine whether a particular book or unit arose orally or in writing, and to understand the situation in which a specific piece arose." Gene Tucker, *Form Criticism of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), p. 8.

pre-history, so that one may discover the function of the material within the Israelite community and the intention of the writer, i.e., what he sought to achieve.

The discipline of form criticism is now coming into maturity, and as a result the concepts and questions which have characterized form-critical analysis are now being tested and challenged. In earlier phases of the movement the typical or general characteristics of the biblical material were emphasized to the exclusion of the individuality which a given unit might possess. Recently, however, scholars are attempting not only to look at typical characteristics but also to see the uniqueness of a passage (when you have seen one prophetic judgment speech you have *not* seen them all!). One should keep in mind that in the following outline, there is some generalization for the sake of clarity.[21]

The first task of the form-analysis outline is to conduct a *structural analysis* of a given text. Such an analysis seeks first of all to isolate a unit by looking for introductory and concluding formulas which mark the beginning and the ending of a unit. In Ps. 134:1-2, the phrase, "bless Yahweh", serves to introduce a unit (v. 1) and to conclude it (v. 2). In the prophetic literature a familiar introductory formula is "hear this word" (cf. Amos 3:1; 4:1; and 5:1). In Jeremiah a familiar introductory phrase is " the word of Yahweh came to me" (cf. 1:4; 2:1; 7:1, etc.). The phrase, "blessed is", is a familiar one in wisdom psalms and often introduces units (cf. e.g., Pss. 1:1; 34:8; 41:1; etc.) One should attempt to structure a unit using a range of structural principles. These include rhetorical or stylistic devices (acrostic [alphabetic] poems, parallelism, keyword association, etc.), "institutional patterns" (decalogue [Ex. 20], the trial form [Hebrew, *rîb*, e.g., Jer. 2], the seven-day week [Gen. 1:1-2:4a], etc.), elements of content

21. There is presently under way a multi-volume form-critical commentary which will cover the entire Old Testament. This work is being edited by Gene Tucker and Rolf Knierim. Several scholars who are now working on this "form-critical project" have recently contributed to an issue of *Interpretation*. One will find articles in that issue by George W. Coates, Dennis J. McCarthy, Roland E. Murphy, and Tucker to be helpful in surveying form-critical method in a variety of literary genres. Cf. *Interpretation*, XXVII/4 (1973). Rolf Knierim's article in that same issue, "Old Testament Form Criticism Reconsidered," (pp. 435-468) is one of the most recent attempts to rethink the earlier work of form criticism and to analyze recent critiques and problems which have arisen in the movement. His footnotes provide an excellent bibliography for further reading in form-critical studies.

which form a logical development, process of thought, climax and anticlimax, and other systematized themes (especially true for narrative material and longer units [cf. Hos. 1-3 or Isa. 1]).[22] It is in the area of structure that one may bring out the individuality of a passage (this being an underemphasized facet of form criticism). Rolf Knierim insists that we aim toward expressing the uniqueness of a given passage. Note the following: "Not only must the structural analysis of the individuality of texts be included into form-critical method, it must, in fact, precede the analysis of the typical structure if the claim that such a typicality inherently determines an individual text is to be substantiated."[23]

The second element of the outline is the determination of *genre*. Normally one uses "genre" to refer to a typical unit of human expression which, in the first instance, can either be written or oral. Typicality means that one would expect to find several examples of a similar genre in biblical and ancient Near Eastern literature. One should note that genres such as prophetic judgment speeches, wisdom sayings, family stories and sagas, and hymns of lament may have originally had oral settings but now have become part of literary works. Genre, however, should also include typical forms of human expression other than linguistic ones; hence, one should also see genre as being a type of human activity or behavior. Knierim is correct to define genre broadly, to include activity and behavior, and thereby to recognize as genre certain rituals (the march around Jericho in Jos. 6 or the repentance ritual at Mizpah, 1 Sam. 7:6) or symbolic prophetic actions (cf. e.g., Jer. 18:1-12; 16:1-12; Hos. 1 and 3; and Ezek. 4:1-3). While one again must note that genre is an element under discussion at present, Knierim's definition is a helpful one: "A genre is a typical unit of expression through activity or behavior, or through the spoken or written word."[24]

22. Knierim's procedure regarding structure has been followed here. One should note his discussion, pp. 460-461. For further reading in the structuring of a passage one should consult the following: Claus Westermann, *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech*, trans. by Hugh C. White (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967); R. E. Murphy, "Form Criticism of Wisdom Literature," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 31(1969), 475-483 and "A New Classification of Literary Forms in the Psalms," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 21 (1959), 83-87; and George W. Coates "The Wilderness Itinerary," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 34 (1972), 135-152.

23. Knierim, p. 461.

24. Rolf Knierim, "Form Criticism: The Present State of an Exegetical

The third aspect of form-critical analysis is the determination of the *life setting* (German: *Sitz im Leben*) of the genre. One must ask of the text the following: "Where did this particular genre originate in Israel and where was it used (in the cult, school, law court, etc.)?" The distinction between origin and use is an important one, for it reflects the fact that units of expression can pass through different life settings. It is the task of the interpreter to attempt to recover both the original life setting and the new life settings through which the text may have passed. For example, Isaiah 6 is a report regarding the call of Isaiah. In one life setting, the genre is a memoir of Isaiah's reflection on his call. Yet this call also functioned to authenticate the prophet's message (Isaiah demands a hearing because he was called by God); thus, a second life setting would be in the context of the prophet's defense of his message in the face of his enemies. Yet one must not forget the *event* itself which provides the original life setting, i.e., in the temple. A second example of a new life setting for a genre is the use of the Priestly Torah by the prophets. This instruction, given by the priests to the people, has been taken out of its original life setting and has been utilized by the prophets in their proclamation of judgment (cf. Isa. 1:10-17; 8:11-15; and Jer. 7:21).[25]

Finally we come to the fourth aspect of text-analysis which is, to a great extent, the culmination point of our recent form-critical dialogue with the text. This aspect seeks to discover the *function* and *intention* of a text. Form-critical method should be flexible enough so that the questions of structure, genre, and life setting are related to and converge upon the meaning of the text within the community. Normally, a text survived in Israel because it fulfilled some function within the Israelite community (to explain the origin of something, to educate, to function in worship, etc.). Discovery of that function (i.e., how a genre was used) should aid in the determination of its intention (i.e, what it expresses, its goal). As in the case

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Discipline," paper presented to the Form Criticism Seminar—Hebrew Scriptures, Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, New York, October 27, 1970. For further discussion regarding the definition and use of "genre," cf. W. G. Doty, "The Concept of Genre in Literary Analysis," in *Proceedings*, ed. by L. C. McGaughy (Society of Biblical Literature, 1972), pp. 413-448.

25. Westermann, p. 203. Knierim, *Interpretation*, p. 464 notes that life setting should no longer be seen as simply *institutional* but broader in scope to include the background (*geistige Heimat*) which underlies a text. Likewise, the relationship between genre and setting needs further examination (cf. p. 449).

of life setting, a text may reflect multiple functions, particularly if the genre is, as Claus Westermann notes, "a borrowed form."[26] The trial imagery used by the prophets had its original function in the law court (first function: legal) but was then utilized by the prophets to provide an indictment of the people (second function: prophetic judgment, cf. e.g., Mic. 6:1-2). The intention of the prophetic lawsuit (bringing Israel to trial) is to make the people aware of the seriousness of their breach of the covenant and their failure to live up to its concomitant demands. The so-called "Song of the Vineyard" (Isa. 5:1-7) originally functioned as a vintage festival song with its goal being entertainment and fun. The song for Isaiah, however, functions as a parable of judgment with the shocking intention of having Judah realize her sins.

A fourth area of exegetical method is *tradition history*. This facet of exegesis concerns the growth and development of biblical materials (the term "redaction criticism" is often used to refer to the final stamp which is placed upon material, e.g., one can see the hand of the final editor in the optimistic ending of Amos 9:8-15 [Deuteronomistic or perhaps post-exilic editing] which reverses the threatening tone of the prophet's message). This aspect of criticism is heavily dependent upon the conclusions we have already reached in our conversation process with the text (literary and form criticism especially). A presupposition of tradition history is that Old Testament texts have developed over long periods of time and that, once a tradition originates, it goes through various stages of preservation in successive communities. Stories are thus passed down from generation to generation (either oral or written), and each generation makes the story "its own", i.e., expands, reinterprets, and includes within the scope of the story its own concerns and world view. It is, therefore, the purpose of tradition history to trace this process, with the hope that various stages of meaning and interpretation can be recovered.[27]

Recently Terence E. Fretheim has convincingly shown various stages of interpretation within the Jacob traditions.[28] Fret-

26. Westermann, p. 199.

27. Walter E. Rast, *Tradition History and the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), p. 18.

28. T. E. Fretheim, "The Jacob Traditions: Theology and Hermeneutic," *Interpretation*, XXVI (1972), 419-436.

heim notes that as the traditions about Jacob passed through several generations, the story was being enhanced with the contemporary concerns of that generation. To the Yahwist, Jacob, the shyster who is ambitious even before his birth (cf. Gen. 25:26, Jacob's grasping at Esau's heel!), who deceives his father (Gen. 27) and receives Esau's rightful blessing, is a mirror image of Israel herself, a sinner who has yet been the recipient of God's grace. The transformation of Jacob at Peniel (Gen. 32:22-32) is a significant point for the Yahwist, for after this event Jacob becomes a *servant* and in Gen. 33:1f. greets Esau as a vassal to a king. The point (*Kerygma*) which the Yahwist makes for his own time is that, like Jacob, Israel (which now possesses the land) should not become arrogant or forget her role of service (just as our father Jacob served!) to the Edomite neighbors and the Aramean enemies. In the Elohist story Jacob is no longer presented as a shyster, but is now the example and model of faith. Such a transition in Jacob reflects the concerns of the Elohist's ninth century community, beset by the danger of the adoption of Canaanite religious practices. In Gen. 35:1ff., Jacob speaks to his entire company to put away false gods. The message should have been clear to the contemporary community of the Elohist: "Listen to what Jacob said, attempt to imitate his devotion and faithfulness to God, and put away false gods!"

To the exilic community Deutero-Isaiah uses the ancient Exodus tradition in a creative way to assure the people of the continuing activity of God in their present set of circumstances. The Exodus tradition is echoed throughout the poems of Deutero-Isaiah (e.g., 40:3-5, a highway in the wilderness; 42:14-16, Yahweh leads his people in a way that they do not know; 48:20-21, the Exodus from Babylon; 49:8-12, entry into the land of promise; etc.). The Exodus theme possessed a special meaning for the Israelites in that it described their story of community identity. Yet Deutero-Isaiah did not merely recite the ancient Exodus motifs (thus only emphasizing the past activity of God). On the contrary, Isaiah "transposed" the ancient event "into a higher key" as he announced the coming salvation as an ongoing and distinctively *new* Exodus: "Behold I am doing a new thing, now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" (Isa. 43:19).[29]

29. Bernhard W. Anderson, "Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah," in *Israel's Prophetic Heritage; Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg*, ed. by. B. W. Anderson and W. Harrelson (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), p. 191.

A fifth area of exegetical analysis concerns particular elements which may be unique to a given unit. *Content criticism* properly identifies and explains important historical allusions and circumstances, institutions and place names, as well as examining key words, phrases, and themes. If there are particular motifs present in the text, these should be examined and analyzed for their development (cf. the "master-slave" motif in Gen. 24).[30] "Covenant" would be an important theme which would need further analysis insofar as it might provide background to a given unit. The evidence of ancient Near Eastern traditions and folklore will often be helpful in understanding a passage (cf. e.g., the ancient Mesopotamian creation and flood stories, the parallels which exist between Israelite prophecy and the Mari letters, and the colorful stories from Egypt such as the *History of Sinuhe* with its parallels to the David and Goliath story).[31] The so-called covenant lawsuit in prophetic literature (cf. Amos 3:1-2) would be an area in which the relationship between the prophet and the covenant might be explored. The appearance of a place name in a text can have interesting implications for the understanding of the text as a whole. One such example is the Song of Songs 6:4, where the ancient capital of the Northern Kingdom, Tirzah, is mentioned (cf. 1 Kings 15:21). Could the mention of this ancient name be evidence that the "descriptive song" (Song of Songs 6:4-10) may be an early composition and may point to a northern provenance?

In taking up a sixth area of biblical exegesis, the *contemporary horizon* of the text, one should refer to something which was said at the outset of this article: that conversation with the text involves an honest view of the text and what it means as well as an honest view of *ourselves*. The purpose of our dialogue with the text cannot rest with a conclusion regarding what the text *meant*. Our goal is not merely to learn something

30. Klaus Koch, *The Growth of the Biblical Tradition*, trans. by S. M. Cupitt (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969), pp. 56ff. Koch uses the term "history of motifs" (*Motivgeschichte*), which is a difficult term to define. Many scholars seek to avoid the use of "motif" because of the difficulty involved in describing a motif with precision. Among the "motifs" which Koch lists are the following: 1) the typical affairs of the house and family (e.g., 1 Sam. 1); 2) the relationship between father and sons (the Joseph Story); and 3) the singling out of a man by God to be a divine instrument (Judg. 6:15; 1 Sam. 9:21).

31. A useful aid for the pastor is J. B. Pritchard's *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958). This book is an abbreviated paperbook version of Pritchard (ed.), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*.

about the past, but to discover something about the present and ourselves (the conversation with the text involves the interpreter!). We have already noted that the Old Testament itself is a process whereby each generation develops ancient traditions so that they might speak with clarity to their present. Each succesive community was not satisfied with a presentation of historical facts but demanded that there be a representation and reinterpretation of past events for "this day" (cf. Josh. 24 and the ritual of covenant renewal). The Word must always be the living Word. To accomplish this the interpreter must become engaged with the text in conversation to the point that he or she becomes vulnerable to its message (a hearing of God's Word should turn around our preconceived notions and humble our pastoral pride!). In beginning honest conversation with the text the pastor is involving his or her own life so that *the* history of the Old Testament becomes one's own history as it addresses human concerns. We must be willing for our preconceived opinions and cherished values to be called into question.

For Christian pastors the conversation with the Old Testament is particularly perilous, for we are faced with the question of the role of the Old Testament in the proclamation of God's Word to the Church. It is centrally important that the Old Testament be seen as an integral part of the Christian proclamation, thus avoiding the danger of seeing the Old Testament as a type of *preliminary* study of human existence which is in some way "completed" by the message of the New Testament.[32] The Old Testament is, in fact, especially valuable for its realistic presentation of man as a concrete historical person who loves, forgives, laments, sins, prays, etc. Karl Barth, in an amusing quotation, confirms this emphasis upon man as a physical creature presented in the Old Testament: "it is a good thing that we have the Old Testament with so many tangible things, so that we see the Gospel is not purely a spiritual thing, merely for soul and heaven. Rather, it is for soul and

32. Herein lies the danger of the Bultmannian view that the Old Testament should be interpreted in terms of the question of "what basic possibility it presents for an understanding of human existence (*Daseinsverständnis*)". Here, the Old Testament only gives a "preunderstanding" to authentic existence presented in the New Testament. R. Bultmann, "The Significance of the Old Testament for the Christian Faith," in *The Old Testament and Christian Faith*, ed. by B. W. Anderson (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 13.

body, heaven and *earth*, inward and *outer* life. There is no hair on my head that is not an interesting thing for God!"[33]

Both testaments, taken together (not separately), "constitute the pattern of God's redemptive dealing with his people."[34] The relationship, therefore, is not a complementary one but an integral one. The Old Testament, moreover, gives a clear picture of humankind, the heir of God's promise of redemption, whose life is lived in the arena of responsible decision-making, failure, success, living, and dying. The writers and speakers of the Old Testament direct words of encouragement, challenge, or judgment to humankind in the midst of humanity's activities. The New Testament does not negate this message nor does it resolve the tension of human existence. On the contrary, the New Testament further affirms God's redemptive plan.[35]

As pastors we do not converse with the text because the biblical situations are "like" our contemporary ones, and we may then compare the "now" with the "then". Our interest in conversing with the text is not an antiquarian one with the past. It is, rather, a part of the perpetual demand placed upon men of faith to speak God's Word in the present. Paul Scherer has noted the need to speak authentically to the present: "Far from being 'like', in a very real sense every Biblical situation *is* our situation—though the two may in no instance ever be identified."[36] Scherer's insight is a key one regarding our conversation with the text. We must always seek to understand the past and the meaning of the biblical text for its own addressees, but we can in no way lift that hunk of history out of its own time into the present. The interpreter must, of course, determine what areas of the human condition were *originally* addressed

33. *Karl Barth's Table Talk*, recorded and ed. by John D. Godsey (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1962), p. 32.

34. Paul Scherer, *The Word God Sent* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 38. Cf. H. W. Wolff, "The Hermeneutical Problem of the Old Testament," in *Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics*, ed. by Claus Westermann, English trans. ed. by J. L. Mays (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1963), pp. 187-189; and R. E. Murphy, "Christian Understanding of the Old Testament," The Robert Cardinal Bellarmine Lecture, St. Louis University Divinity School, October 28, 1970, in *Theology Digest*, XVIII (1970), 321-332.

35. D. Moody Smith has stated that man's creatureliness and responsibility in the Old Testament are neither "resolved nor negated, but redeemed by the Gospel message of the New Testament" (p. 65). One would agree with Professor Smith's statement with the understanding that the redemption of the New Testament is but a *continuation* of the redemptive activity of God throughout the history of interaction between God and his people.

36. Scherer, p. 38.

in a given text. Moreover he or she must faithfully evaluate his or her own present to determine the *contemporary* human condition.[37] Now in the midst of the conversational dialogue the interpreter must faithfully announce the Word for the present. Only in the interaction between the interpreter and the text can faithful announcement take place. The text cannot speak alone, for such a speaking would involve a simplistic equation between past and present; nor can the interpreter speak without being firmly grounded in the tradition and the history of interpretation which witness to God's action throughout the centuries and join one in the mutuality of conversation with the text.

In the act of preaching the pastor opens up to the congregation the conversation which is taking place. In the proclamation of the Word the ancient human concerns are affirmed as our concerns, given humankind's historic life of sorrow, joy, triumph, defeat, birth, and death. Preaching becomes an invitation for others *to hear* and *identify with* these human concerns and an opportunity for God's people *to participate* in the continuing redemptive activity of God.[38] Just as the pastor is vulnerable in his or her conversation with the text, so are God's people vulnerable to being challenged into insecurity by hearing the Word.

37. Lawrence E. Toombs, "The Problematic of Preaching from the Old Testament," *Interpretation*, XXIII (1969), p. 304.

38. The pastor may find helpful a series of articles published in *The Methodist Theological School in Ohio Journal*, Fall 1967-Winter 1972, entitled "Preparation for Biblical Preaching," by Simon DeVries (Old Testament), Edward Meyer (homiletics), and Robert Tannehill (New Testament). The articles are arranged as follows: 1) The Preacher Approaches His Text (questions which come to mind when the text is read); 2) The Preacher Studies his Text (background and structure as well as a verse-by-verse analysis to understand the intent of the passage as the original audience would have understood it); and 3) The Preacher Develops his Text (includes some false directions that a sermon might take). For an analysis of this series and other recent literature in this area cf. Lloyd R. Bailey, "From Text to Sermon: Reflections on Recent Discussion," in a forthcoming issue (1975) of *Concilium* dealing with liturgy. Other recent works of value for the pastor are the following by Elizabeth Achtemeier: *The Old Testament and the Proclamation of the Gospel* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1973) and "The Relevance of the Old Testament for Christian Preaching" in *A Light Unto My Path: Old Testament Studies in Honor of Jacob M. Myers*, ed. by H. N. Bream, R. D. Heim, and C. A. Moore (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1974), pp. 3-24.

Focus on Faculty

ROLAND E. MURPHY, O. Carm.
Professor of Old Testament

My first contact with Duke was in 1967-68, when I was a Visiting Professor in the Department of Religion, which was chaired by Dean Thomas Langford. When I became a "free agent", as it were, in 1970, and was Visiting Professor at Princeton Theological Seminary, I was contacted by the then Dean Robert Cushman and invited to return to Duke as a faculty member of the Divinity School. I was delighted to accept, because of pleasant associations with Duke faculty and students, and returned to find myself once again working with Thomas Langford.

In these days of "ethnic identity" I suppose I should begin my story accordingly. I was born in Chicago of Irish parents, and received a Catholic parochial school education. Because the priests and brothers of the Carmelite Order staffed Mt. Carmel High School on the street where I lived (*Dante* Avenue —can you imagine that on the South Side of Chicago, in "Studs" Lonigan days?), I came to know them well and decided to become a Carmelite. Life in the prep seminary in Niagara Falls was mainly studies and sports. After a year of novitiate, given over to prayer and consideration of the Carmelite lifestyle, I entered college at the Catholic University of America, where I majored in philosophy and languages. Four years of theology at that institution followed, and I realized that my summer work for an M.A. degree in Philosophy (eventually obtained) was being submarined by an interest in Bible and Hebrew. After being ordained to the priesthood and serving in a parish in Chicago in 1943-44, I was sent back by my provincial superior to Catholic University to train in biblical studies.

The most stimulating courses in graduate study were those in Semitic languages, so I determined to get an M.A. in Semitics after getting the doctorate in theology. In 1948 I was invited to lecture in the Department of Semitic Languages at C.U. of A., and a teaching career began—at the University and also at Whitefriars Hall, where I taught the Carmelite seminarians

(until 1969). I received a fellowship from the American Schools of Oriental Research in 1950-51 for archeological work in Jerusalem; it was enough to find out that I was too "bookish" (and impatient) to pursue that field. My specialty in Semitics was to be Christian Arabic literature but I was diverted from this in 1956, when the administration asked me to transfer to the school of theology at C.U. of A. to teach Old Testament. They offered me the opportunity to study in Rome at the Biblical Institute, where I received the Licentiate in Scripture in 1958. From then on my concerns were mainly Old Testament, although the experience in Semitics stood me in good stead.

During all this time Catholic biblical scholars had close association with their Protestant and Jewish counterparts in the Society of Biblical Literature and in other ventures. When the ecumenical breakthrough occurred in the early '60s, I was invited to teach as a Visiting Professor at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 1965-66. This was followed by an invitation to do the same at Yale Divinity School in the fall semester of '66. Then the first Duke interlude came—and we are back to my first paragraph.

It was a good experience to live at Duke—as faculty fellow at York in '67, and at Brown in '71. Since '72 I have been living at Chapel Hill with the Jesuits in a wooden frame house, part of which was the house of the first president of UNC! That's having the best of both worlds: living in Chapel Hill and teaching at Duke. We are all active in the Newman student center there, which is side by side with the Methodist center.

One of the most exciting features of my extracurricular activities has been the giving of biblical institutes at various places over the last ten years, running from "Seminary in the Mountains" (Mt. Rainier) for Protestant clergy to Old Testament lectures for Catholic diocesan priests in Worcester, Mass. None was more pleasant than the "mini-course" in Psalms at the Convocation here at Duke in November, '73. Last Spring I gave a paper on the authority of the Bible at a three-day meeting of the Belmont College-Wake Forest University ecumenical institute. I have been elected as theological consultant (along with Brevard Childs and Albert Outler) for the theological education committee of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. This derived from my close work with the faculty of Union Theological Seminary in Richmond where, along with Duke's James Price and Fred Herzog, I have served on the editorial

council for *Interpretation* since 1965. Other editorial activities have included the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, the international theological review, *Concilium*, and the *Jerome Biblical Commentary* (1969).

I have always identified my priest ministry with the service of the Word—the study and teaching of the Bible—and I have found great joy in it. This opportunity came at a time when a biblical movement was about to vitalize the Roman Catholic Church at home and abroad (the *Divino afflante Spiritu* encyclical of 1943 played an important role in this). I was privileged to teach many seminarians, and also laity, and to participate in the new Catholic translation of the Bible (New American Bible, 1970). And now I find it a pleasant challenge to teach Bible to Duke Divinity School students in our common effort to understand the word of God and to live by it.

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JOHN H. WESTERHOFF
Associate Professor of Religion and Education

There is still a rumor circulating in some quarters that professors, if not a little lower than the angels, are a little more than human. Writing autobiographical vignettes for colleagues, students, and alumni tempts me to perpetuate this lie. Who seeks to expose his/her sin, weaknesses, inadequacies, and failings? Indeed, who is not anxious about revealing his/her feelings along with thoughts and achievements? Nevertheless, if I am to help you know me as a person (the aim of these ramblings), I will have to risk revealing more than the surface of my life. But where to begin? So much of my childhood and youth has been repressed. At best I reflect negatively on those years—with one exception. Every summer I attended Camp Lincoln in the Adirondack Mountains of New York. Here I discovered myself, and perhaps because of that experience mountain climbing, canoeing, sailing, biking, and wilderness camping are still among my favorite activities.

My college years remain a paradox: important to my growth and development, I rarely mention them. Having been raised in an Ivy League, upper middle-class professional community, my attendance at Ursinus College in Collegeville, Pennsylvania, was a mark of failure. However, it was here that I matured

psychologically, if not intellectually. While my B.S. in psychology was no great academic achievement, I count as my achievements such accomplishments as class and student government presidencies. I recall the joys of fraternity life (it helped my social development), the tennis team (still my favorite sport), waiting on tables at a gourmet restaurant (today my hobby is cooking), and meeting Barnie, my wife. She has played a more important role in my life than I will ever find words to acknowledge. While we have had our ups and downs and there have been days when we affirmed our love but questioned our ability to live happily together, we have shared a host of significant experiences, not the least of which is parenting three wonderful children.

Spiritually and intellectually, my life began at Harvard Divinity School; these years remain among my most memorable. Shortly after arriving in Cambridge, Barnie and I were married and became houseparents at a Boston University girls' dorm (that too was an education!). Barnie completed her graduate studies in physical therapy and paid my bills. I locked myself in the stacks of Widener Library. Uninterested in community life or extracurricular activities, I thrived on scholarship and the academic life. My most significant influences were people: James Luther Adams, Paul Tillich, Krister Stendahl, George Williams, G. Ernest Wright, and Arthur Darby Noch.

While yet uncommitted to the parish ministry, I spent my weekends working in the Needham Congregational Church. Money influenced me to take the job, yet within that community I identify my conversion and growth as a person of faith, and my commitment to serving Christ and His church. My spiritual mentor and friend during these important years was the Reverend Dr. Herbert Smith, a Harvard divinity graduate and my "pastor and teacher." He helped me learn how to apply the theory I acquired at the University to the life of the parish. Any success I have known as a minister of the Gospel can be attributed to him.

Ordained as a minister in the United Church of Christ, I moved with Barnie to Presque Isle, Maine, and our first church. Here in potato country I acquired the skills necessary for ministry. By supporting my experimentation, praising my successes, and forgiving my failures, these people educated me in ways a divinity school or field education could never have done.

My years in the parish ministry were good, but there were

some ministerial duties I found difficult. I am shy and often feel insecure. While I love people and desire contact with them, confronted by a group I will most likely stand alone and sometimes have difficulty making conversation. As a result I'm often lonely; all of which might be difficult, for those who have witnessed only my compensations, to believe.

After two happy years in Maine, I was called back to Needham, Massachusetts, to assume responsibility for the church's educational ministry. Without any "how-to" courses to prepare me, I assumed responsibility for a church school of over a thousand children and a youth group with more than three hundred young people. I can remember securing and training two hundred teachers and, with the aid of a director of religious education and three intern-seminarians, experimenting with a host of educational endeavors. During those years I also had the opportunity to share in the development and promotion of what was then the new United Church of Christ curriculum. Such experiences and a lot of reading introduced me to religious education. By temperament, when confronted with a new problem I first seek to understand it theoretically. I have never been interested in "how-to" books. I'm happiest when I'm struggling to understand a problem in a new and different way, and I become thrilled by the challenge of applying creatively my new understanding. I prefer to find my own solutions than use someone else's. I'm insecure when nothing is changing and happiest when surrounded by crisis, change, and problems. I celebrate the fact that the creative spark which is in all of us was never destroyed in me. I also believe that my classical academic education at Harvard was excellent preparation for my ministry.

From Needham I was called to the First Congregational Church, on the campus of Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts. While these were relatively quiet days, the college provided a number of challenges and opportunities. One highlight was the visit of the first two Taize brothers to live in this country. It was Brother Christopher, a lawyer and social activist, who introduced me to the spiritual life. He and Father George, my Russian Orthodox priest, historian of worship, advisor at Harvard, greatly influenced my life.

During these years I framed my somewhat eclectic nature. For example, I find most meaningful "high church" sacramental worship; I crave the intimacy of life in a small faith community;

I am most at home with liberal theology and the progressive tradition; I affirm free church congregational polity; and as a Christian I am committed to action for radical social change.

The arts too are part of my life. Whenever doubt surfaces, I am apt to turn to the Credo in Bach's *B Minor Mass* or the medieval galleries of an art museum. I'm a lover of the contemporary arts, but I feel my roots in the past. Both reason and the affections are important to me, but the focus of my concern is the will.

After only two years in Williamstown and eight in the parish ministry, I was called to join the staff of the Division of Christian Education in the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, a national agency of the United Church of Christ. Among other things they asked me to create a new magazine on education in church and society. I pointed out to them that I didn't know a great deal about education and even less about editing. They pointed out to me that that was an advantage: I didn't know what I couldn't do. With that challenge I headed for offices in New York and Philadelphia and a bedroom in New Jersey. For the next eight years I lived a strange life, which brings me back to my children.

Jill was born in Presque Isle, Jack in Needham, Beth in Williamstown. Anything I could write concerning how I feel about them would sound sentimental. But I know I owe them more than they will ever owe me. I therefore hurt because, while I feel so deeply about them, for eight years I ignored them. During those important years Barnie assumed the sole responsibility of their nurture; she deserves all the credit for their many good points, and I deserve the blame for their shortcomings. I often feel guilty about those years. Nevertheless they were very significant in my continuing growth.

During this time I lived a number of lives and traveled throughout most of Europe, Latin America, and every state in the Union except Alaska. I became socially radicalized and joined Blacks, Mexican and Indian Americans, the poor, welfare mothers, farm workers, and, most recently, women in their struggle for liberation and justice. I conducted what seems like a million continuing education events for ministers and professional educators. I edited an award-winning magazine that often disturbed the complacency of the church. I taught a variety of subjects at a variety of institutions: for example, Education and Mass Communications at Union Theological

Seminary in New York, and Education for Social Change at Princeton Theological Seminary. I joined a Boston-based educational consulting firm (T.D.R. Associates) and acted as a consultant to Mr. Rogers' neighborhood, trying to discover a means for influencing early childhood education in the United States. I worked for NBC-TV creating "Take a Giant Step", a Saturday television show on values for youth; it lasted two seasons, though I failed in my goal to transform network children's television. I worked with the American Association of University Women, creating a national educational program to prepare women to engage in social change. I worked with the Human Relations Division of the National Education Association on educational resources related to minority issues, and I developed a new planning process for institutions called "Futures Planning," which has been used with diverse groups such as a Texas school board and the Religious Education Association.

During those years I wrote over a hundred articles, two books (*Values for Tomorrow's Children* and *A Colloquy in Christian Education*), and a series of curriculum resources for youth on liberation education. During my sabbatical year I was both Lentz Lecturer in Education at Harvard and director of an experimental program in Religious Education at Andover-Newton Theological Seminary. At the same time I helped to develop a new curriculum for religious education based upon the Biblical concept of Shalom. I also began a doctoral program at Teachers' College, though I was not sure for what end.

Mostly, as you might guess, I was away from home. Four days a month with my family was all I could spare. I accomplished a great deal, but life was not as I wanted it to be.

Then, as if by Providence, I was returning from a trip (Barnie and I were to leave the next day for Europe for our first vacation in many years) and was hit in an airport parking lot, sustaining a fractured neck. They called it a miracle. Eighty per cent of those who are injured as I was die, and the rest are totally paralyzed. I am a non-statistic. I *know* I live by grace! While the accident put me in bed for six months, it also gave me an opportunity to reflect upon my life. During those reflective days I still edited *Colloquy*, wrote a new book, *Generation and Generation*, and continued my studies at Columbia, focusing on anthropology and the history of religion and education. My dissertation was on William Holmes McGuffey and his Readers.

During this period of my recuperation I received the invitation to join the faculty at Duke Divinity School. That, too, was, from my perspective, an experience of providence and grace. Now I am at Duke, and while I haven't been here very long, I cannot recall a single time in my life when I have felt more fulfilled. I feel that I'm doing what God has called me to do, and I have been reunited with my family.

I feel it is an awesome responsibility to teach. I suffer a good deal along with my teaching. Anxiety over whether or not I'm really helping my students to learn is constant. I sometimes get depressed after class because I judge myself so severely. And yet teaching brings me joy. Of course I have my own definition of a professor: a professor is one who professes what he/she believes at the moment so as to provoke others to think for themselves. I therefore worry when people take notes (I change my mind frequently and I would hate to spend the rest of my life refunding people's money). I am also caught in a tension between wanting to give every moment to my students and engaging in my own research and writing. Already I have outlines for two new books and a half dozen research projects. I'm still intent on framing an alternative future for education in the church.

But first, I'm concerned about preparing some parish ministers for their role as educators and others to specialize in the church's educational ministry. Second, I'm concerned about religion in higher education and the preparing of Ph.D.'s to teach. I also have a dream of taking my interests and knowledge of religion and education into other facets of university life. I hope to grow through opportunities to be with my colleagues and students. I want to be more with my family and become more involved in my church, community, state, and nation. I cherish the excitement of being part of a great university and divinity school, the clash of many minds, the stimulation, criticism and encouragement of colleagues, students, and family.

As you can see, I'm quite human. If I have any uniqueness, it is my optimism. In spite of an awareness of sin, I live in faith by hope that the social gospel of love and justice will one day be realized. And I'm committed to playing my small role in God's kingdom building. My presence at Duke I understand as an opportunity to be faithful to that commitment. I'm grateful!

Book Reviews

Eerdman's Handbook to the Bible. David Alexander and Patricia Alexander, eds. Eerdmans. 1973. 680 pp. $12.95.

Intended as an aid for "Bible students at every level", this lavishly illustrated volume provides information about the biblical world (e.g., everyday life, money, calendar, history), the biblical text (e.g., versions), commentary upon each of the biblical books (both Testaments), and a dictionary-index. Beautiful color photos are common (almost one per page) and helpful maps-diagrams are scattered throughout. Supplementary articles are provided at the appropriate places (e.g., "Clean and Unclean Animals" within the discussion of Leviticus). The language is admirably clear; a high school student would be able to read it with comprehension. Technical terms and foreign language vocabulary are avoided.

The individual articles have been written by a variety of scholars, largely British (but to advertise them as "the world's leading biblical scholars" is an exaggeration). One could describe them as "conservative" in their scholarship (hardly "Fundamentalists"), and they generally insist that the OT be interpreted in light of more authoritative NT teaching. The following remark is typical (p. 32): ". . . the prophets were unable fully to understand all the implications of their own teaching. The source of their utterance . . . was in fact 'the spirit of Christ within them'." There is a separate section entitled "Christ in the Psalms" (p. 329). Yet the authors are often open and cautious in their positions, e.g., "Whether or not scientists are right in saying that we evolved from lower forms, there still had to be a first male that was truly human" (p. 24). Or again, speaking of Genesis 1: "This is not a treatise on geology, biology, or any other science" (p. 127). Even while suggesting that the Jonah story may be literally true, they can make such helpful remarks as, "Argument over this must not be allowed to blind us to the whole point of the story" (p. 448). At other points, the authors will try desperately to adhere to the letter of the text, in the face of serious evidence to the contrary. For example, the discussion of archaeological results at Jericho, showing no signs of habitation at the time of the Israelite conquest (13th cent., B.C.), need not contradict the biblical story (Joshua 6), since the signs may have eroded away just as mud-brick ruins from earlier periods of the site are known to have done (p. 214). Whether other (non-soluble) signs would have thus eroded is not asked, however! A more serious example of this mentality is found in the discussion of Exodus 6 (where God's proper name is said to have been revealed for the first time, although other passages reveal its use prior to this time, e.g., Genesis 4:1), where the "explanation" flatly contradicts the biblical text (p. 158).

Sometimes an author will pass quickly over opposing points of view, seeming to imply that they are hardly worthy of consideration. The debate over sources in the books of Samuel (based in part upon duplicate accounts of the same event) is brushed aside with, "On closer inspection, however, most of the so-called duplicates emerge quite clearly as two separate if similar events. . ." (p. 231). The extent to which this clarity is dictated by preconceived notions of inspiration remains unquestioned, as do the implications of the episodes not covered by the term "most". Or again, the discussion of "Literary Criticism" (pp. 182-184) mentions "source criticism", but the most important implications (in Pentateuchal studies) are covered in only four lines, giving none of the supporting evidence or the theological insights derived from the method. One might at least expect one clear example or bibliography for further study! The article concludes by noting that "More recently, however, it has been argued that the differences [upon which the sources J, E, D, P are based] . . . have no significance." Does such a mere observation establish anything?

Perhaps the editors have tried to do too much in a single volume, with the result that really helpful explanation is impossible. Can a complex prophet like Hosea be meaningfully discussed in three pages (large print with wide spaces between sections)? No attention is called to the changed political situation since the time of his early contemporary, Amos, which is crucial for an understanding of their radically different theologies. Likewise, no insight is given into the causes of the debate over the merits and dangers of kingship (I Samuel 8), and hence the crucial theme of the tension between living under the covenant and under the state is unrecognized.

I turn now to a series of selected assertions which are in error or which may be debated. "Cush" does not invariably refer to "The Sudan" (p. 671), for it may denote the Mesopotamian Kassites as well. The earliest OT manuscripts in Hebrew prior to the discoveries at Qumran are not the 9th century A.D. codices (p. 69), but the Cairo Geniza fragments of the 8th century or earlier. Why is the Hebrew word *Torah* translated by "Law" (pp. 122, 124), a notorious and prejudicial inaccuracy? May one discuss the chronology of Israel's kings with no mention of the evidence in the Septuagint (pp. 269-271), in view of the recent work by Shenkel (1968)? Is the tension between "true" and "false" prophets one of the "old morality" vs. a "new morality" (p. 370)? Is it not rather a problem of sources, i.e., the Mosaic (conditional) covenant vs. the Davidic (unconditional) one? There is no mention of this crucial insight, even in the discussion of Isaiah, nor is there even discussion of the covenant with David under the general discussion of "covenant" (p. 123). Masonry of the surviving Temple wall does not go back to the time of Zerubbabel (p. 310)! Can one seriously assert that Abraham believed that God would raise Isaac from the dead (p. 141), given the OT view of man? Why is the KJV described as "the Authorized" version (pp. 76, 78, 79), when in fact the work of Cover-

dale (1535) was likewise "authorized" by the King of England, and both the Great Bible (1539) and the Bishops Bible (1569) received "authorization" from the Church as well (whereas the KJV did not)? Does Jesus' riding on an ass signify humility (p. 458), or is he following an ancient custom by which kings always ride this animal rather than a horse?

In conclusion: this is a beautiful book, which will undoubtedly be helpful to conservative laity, who may justifiably lament that far too much space is wasted. However for serious theological students of whatever perspective it has little to commend it. It is too brief, incomplete, and flawed with errors. And there are many who will not be able to accept its conservative and Christocentric stance, under which much of the OT message is obscured.

—Lloyd Bailey

Sex in the Bible. Tom Horner. Tuttle. 1974. 188 pp. $7.50.

As the jacket truthfully proclaims, this book "is not a sensationalized account for the puerile voyeur". Tom Horner is actually the Reverend Thomas M. Horner, alumnus of the Duke Divinity School (1949), Ph.D. of Columbia University, former teacher of Bible at the Philadelphia Divinity School, later parish priest and chaplain to Episcopal students at Skidmore college.

As to the book itself, if it had been of prurient interest it would have been issued as a cheap paperback, with a lurid cover. On the contrary, the publisher, with offices in Rutland, Vermont, and Tokyo, Japan, specializes in superior craftsmanship. This book, printed and bound in Japan, is a printer's work of art and will probably soon be a collector's item. It could not have been produced at all in its present form in the U.S.A., and therefore is not overpriced. Even the proofreading is almost perfect, unusual in these days.

As to content, the author follows his own ideas, not paying much attention to the several works on the same subject that have appeared during the last decade. The arrangement is topical, with such headings as marriage, divorce, adultery, seduction, rape, prostitution, virginity, homosexuality, and the like. References throughout the Bible on each topic are brought together and discussed realistically, each one viewed "like it is" for the common reader, not the scholar. Where there is a controversial point, Horner states his own common-sense view without dogmatism.

The next to the last chapter, entitled "Jesus Christ and Sex", affords opportunity for discussion of some controversial ideas that are floating around today. For example, was Mary Magdalene a former prostitute? Possibly, but there is no conclusive evidence. Did she and Jesus have an "affair"? There was an attachment, but not of a sexual nature. Was Jesus married, as a recent book claims? No proof whatever, just an interesting speculation. Was Jesus a homosexual? Again, no proof at all. Behind these conclusions the author presents good reasoning, which will be clarifying and edifying to any reader looking for fact rather than speculation.

The last chapter presents in translation a few selected "Love Poems from the Bible". It is significant that the concluding selection is Paul's great hymn from I Corinthians 13. Thus in the end the spiritual transcends the physical, and we are left with what the reviewer regards as a true impression of the subject as a whole. Congratulations, Tom!

—W. F. Stinespring

The Politics of Jesus. John Howard Yoder. Eerdmans. 1972. 260 pp. $3.45.

It is hazardous for a simple ethicist and a non-biblical scholar, whose Greek is rusty indeed, to assess the worth of this exciting book of John Yoder, well-known Mennonite scholar, and president of Goshen Biblical Seminary. There is certainly an awesome support of footnote documentation from biblical scholars, as well as theologians, for his exegesis and interpretation.

His thesis is a bold one. In place of the usual "spiritualized" or privatized reading of the import of Jesus, or an anachronistic radical interim-ethic, Yoder interprets the ministry of Jesus as presenting to men "one particular social-political-ethical option" (p. 23), highly relevant to contemporary Christian action in today's world. He builds his case primarily on Luke. He makes much of the Messianic mission of Jesus to preach good news to the poor, to "proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord", which is interpreted in terms of the jubilee year in the Jewish tradition, when debts are wiped out and economic inequities broken down. Thus, in the Lord's prayer, "forgive us our debts" is to be taken literally, as monetary debts, for "debt is seen as the paradigmatic social evil" (p. 41) and becomes the mandate for a Christian disciple, then as now. Yoder does not hazard any suggestion as to how this economic discipleship might be translated into the terms of large-scale policy in modern capitalistic societies.

As Yoder reads it, the political message that Jesus brought is that of non-violent resistance to the principalities and powers. He rejected the way of the Zealots. The radically new concept of power is found in the cross, which is the mark of what Nietzsche might call the "transvaluation of values". "Servanthood replaces dominion, forgiveness absorbs hostility" (p. 134). The concept of the principalities and powers Yoder reads in an Augustinian sense, as fallen or perverted creatures or structures. In the cross, Jesus breaks the grip of the powers, and this message St. Paul proclaims as the central liberating word for the early church. It should be the central witness of the church today in both its "conscientious participation" and its "conscientious objection".

Yoder's passion for his thesis leads him to some highly tendential statements: "The one temptation the man Jesus faced . . . was the temptation to exercise social responsibility in the interests of justified revolution through the use of available violent means." (p. 98) The *one* temptation? And some rather presumptive claims: "The more we learn about the Jewishness of Jesus . . . the more evident it becomes that he could not have been perceived by his contemporaries otherwise than

we here have portrayed him." (p. 114)

Yet withal this book performs a notable service to Christian ethicists, for it lays to rest for good and all the anemic, spiritualized, other-worldly, Christology with which modern evangelical churches are cursed. It establishes strongly the socio-political character of the Christian gospel. It is good to have a study of Jesus which upsets and shoves around the comfortable furniture of the mind of the religious establishment and the pretty pictures on its walls. This not just to upset, but to make a cogent case for a revolutionary Christ. Further, for this reviewer, Yoder is most persuasive in his case against the "liberal" pacifist position, which would validate the way of non-violence because it works, and his case for a "vocational" pacifism whose worth is not judged by its pragmatic success as strategy, but by its integrity in faithful witness to Christ. The question of how such a vocational Christian pacifism should or might be translated into the terms of American foreign policy, however, remains unanswered.

—Waldo Beach

Baker's Dictionary of Christian Ethics. Carl F. H. Henry, ed. Baker. 1973. 726 pp. $16.95.

Carl F. H. Henry, the editor of *Baker's Dictionary of Christian Ethics*, says in the preface that the "flexuous modern outlook offers no solid basis whatever for ethical norms" and thus "inevitably leads to nihilism". It is to meet this challenge and correct this situation that Henry and his conservative co-authors set out here to probe "once again the heritage of revealed ethics". Accordingly, this work "provides more than illumination on the Christian lifestyle. It lays bare the very foundations of the [sic!] biblical ethic, expresses its content, indicates its impact upon man and society in the past, expounds its relevance to the problems besetting our own age, and wrestles some of the frontier moral dilemmas of the emerging future."

That is an ambitious program, even (or especially!) for a dictionary which covers several hundred topics and is written, according to the dust jacket, by 263 "evangelical authors". I think it only partly succeeds. The principal distinction of the book is that, whatever the varieties of subject-matter and despite sometimes conflicting moral teachings, all the authors do embrace a biblicism.

The entry on "status of women", for example,—after citing both OT and NT texts—concludes with a somber warning: "When a woman tries to usurp the place and responsibilities given to a man (and vice versa), there will be a disruption. For the true believer liberation comes through obedience to the truth of God and renouncing one's rights in the service of others (John 17:17; Rom. 15:1-3; Gal. 5:13)." I was unable, incidentally, to identify a single woman among the 263 authors! Or again, while the entry on "adultery" acknowledges that fornicators will not inherit the kingdom of God (I Cor. 6:9-20), the author allows that Jesus' attitude toward the woman taken in adultery was forgiving (John 8:11) and therefore "if adultery is not tolerable to God,

neither is it the unpardonable sin"!

There are numerous other examples, but within a brief review perhaps these will suffice to illustrate the tenuous hold the editor's intention has at virtually every point of specific moral advice. The entries achieve better success at a methodological or meta-ethical level. What seems to be the common or coherent referent throughout is a formal appeal to scripture as "the only infallible rule of faith and practice". But I think that this tends to function as a formal principle only, and that the moral guidance which is predicated on this "infallible rule" is rather broadly and dissimilarly formulated (compare, e.g., the variant entries for conscientious objection, ecclesiastical cooperation, and councils of churches).

An interesting exception to this otherwise general characteristic of the entries is "euthanasia", where an unambiguous prohibition is located in simple assertion of the 6th commandment. But the "heritage of revealed ethics" fails us again if we suppose a similar (not to say uniform) application is to be made to abortion or war or capital punishment. Indeed, while "genocide" is alleged to be "the most extreme violation of the 6th commandment conceivable", the "abolition of the death penalty presupposes the falsity of Christian principles"! But there is no need to labor this abuse of scripture; all of us know the devious uses to which scripture can be put, and especially when those who use scripture suppose themselves to be immune to any interpretive influence than that of Holy Spirit.

The most instructive and useful articles are descriptive, data-based definitions; but even these are, soon or late, usually prejudiced by the so-called "conservatism" of authors and frequently concluded by hortatory admonitions (compare, e.g., the final paragraph of the entry on "ethical relativism").

Even though articles range from "abandonment" to "Zoroastrian ethics"—and include "Watergate"!—I don't think I would pay $16.95 for this book. If you know the "evangelical bias", you can—say 99 times out of 100 tries—accurately predict the content of these entries, or surely their "moral slant". If, on the other hand, you share the view that anything purporting to be *the biblical ethic* is a figleaf of somebody's imagination, you would be a little skeptical of what you read here anyhow. The problem, in last analysis, is not that these authors are uninformed or ill-intentioned; but that, in critical assessment, they are unbiblical. Nothing finally substitutes for primary sources, not even the best reference works, but my own opinion is that both *A Dictionary of Religion and Ethics* (Matthews and Smith, eds., 1923) and *Dictionary of Christian Ethics* (Macquarrie, ed., 1967) are superior to *Baker's Dictionary of Christian Ethics.*

—Harmon L. Smith

John Wesley: A Theological Biography, Vol. 2 Part II. Martin Schmidt. Translated by Denis Inman. Abingdon. 1973. 320 pp. $12.95.

This is the concluding volume of a three-volume work which was

published in its original German issue in two volumes (1953, 1966). Dr. Schmidt is Professor of Historical Theology in the ancient Ruprecht-Karl-University, Heidelberg, East Germany, and has made valuable contributions to Wesley scholarship. His background as a Lutheran and his careful work among primary sources, especially some not readily available to British and American scholars, make this trilogy something of a landmark in Wesley scholarship. Probably the most valuable is Vol. 1, which utilizes many little known German sources to illuminate Wesley's spiritual and theological pilgrimate to the epochal year of 1738, when his heart was "strangely warmed". The remaining two volumes (Vol. 2 of the original German edition) forsake the chronological for a topical arrangement, dealing in general with "John Wesley's Life Mission" in ten chapters surveying ten aspects of that mission. It is highly doubtful whether in fact, except in the very broadest sense, Wesley's "course remained constant after his conversion on 24th May 1738," as Dr. Schmidt asserts to justify this topical arrangement. The topical treatment has real value in itself, however, and the work would have had still more value if fuller research had been conducted on each theme as a theme, and greater discipline had been exercised in eliminating material which though interesting in itself did not contribute to an understanding of the announced topic.

Vol. 2, Part 1 described "The Beginnings of the Evangelistic Movement", especially Wesley's relations with the Moravians, the geographical spread of the movement, John Wesley as organizer, his relationships with the Church of England, and the opposition to Methodists. The present volume moves on to other aspects, dealing more fully with Wesley himself than with his movement as a whole.

Chapter 6, "John Wesley as Preacher", points out that Wesley "conceived of preaching as a theological task" and that "his sermons themselves developed into doctrinal statements of principle". Dr. Schmidt devotes 53 out of 57 pages to analysing a number of Wesley's major sermons, to be found in the first four (of nine) volumes which constitute the doctrinal standards of Methodism. Valuable as this is, however, it leaves unexplored Wesley's homiletic methods, and his many sermons which were not primarily theological in content.

Chapter 7 really continues the theme of Chapter 6, under the title, "John Wesley as Theological Writer". The author gives a useful survey of the diverse nature of Wesley's theological and ethical writings, but the bulk of the chapter is occupied with an analysis of some major works, the brief *The Character of a Methodist*, the *Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion, The Doctrine of Original Sin, A Plain Account of Christian Perfection, A Christian Library*, and the life of John Fletcher. Dr. Schmidt emphasizes Wesley's similarity as an author to Martin Luther.

Chapter 8, "John Wesley as Pastor", although drawing upon some evidence in his *Journal*, is based mainly upon a careful study of Wesley's correspondence with a group of people with whom he was on fairly intimate terms—

the Reverend Samuel Furly and his sister Dorothy, Sarah Ryan and Sarah Crosby, Ann Bolton, Lady Maxwell, the Reverend John Fletcher and his wife Mary Bosanquet, and John's brother Charles. Close attention is given to a study of Wesley's letters to his own wife. This is valuable as far as it goes, but is far from being a definitive study of its announced subject because it is based upon a limited field of evidence, completely omitting, for instance, Wesley's announced pastoral ideals and his pastoral training for his preachers, as seen in the *Minutes* of the annual Conferences; nor is there any study of the pastoral implications of Methodist fellowship meetings and philanthropic activities.

The latter defect is partly remedied in Chapter 9, "John Wesley as Educationalist", a very brief study of Wesley's successful experiment in founding Kingswood School. The closing chapter, entitled "John Wesley: Take Him for All in All", contains a perceptive analysis of Wesley's single-minded pursuit of evangelism (in the broadest sense), a pursuit in which he was as remorseless with others as with himself. Dr. Schmidt also summarizes the varied tributes paid to Wesley by his contemporaries, and compares him with other great Christian leaders of modern times.

Altogether this is a work well worth the attention of both general reader and Wesleyan scholar. It is well documented: indeed almost one-third of the volume is taken up with footnotes, bibliography, and a somewhat limited index. One must complain, however, about the disposition of the voluminous (and valuable) notes at the end, with no information provided in the running heads about the pages or even the chapters to which they refer. Almost inevitably, there are a few misprints, such as "Welsey" for "Wesley" (p. 7), "Congers Middleton" for "Conyers Middleton" (p. 110), "oustanding" for "outstanding" (p. 117), and "dichotome" for "dichotomy" (p. 214). Nor can all Dr. Schmidt's claims, even in his special field of historical theology, be accepted as they are stated, as when he compares Wesley to the German Pietists, saying, "Like the latter, Wesley demanded that Holy Communion should only be administered to earnest Christians." (p. 11) In fact one of Wesley's key principles was that the Lord's Supper might be a converting as well as a confirming ordinance, witness his words to the Moravian Molther, "I believe it right for him who knows he has not faith . . . to communicate" (*Journal*, Dec. 31, 1739). Dr. Inman's translation runs smoothly, and the translator has served the reader well by some corrections and additions, especially in the footnotes and the bibliography. The minor shortcomings are amply atoned for by many valuable insights, cogently stated, arising from Dr. Schmidt's scholarly background and enthusiastic research.

—Frank Baker